

DS&W Written Service - Trinity Sunday 12th June 2022 by Revd Steph Jenner

Psalm 104: 30 – 33

When you send forth your spirit, they are created,
and you renew the face of the ground.
May the glory of the LORD endure forever;
may the LORD rejoice in his works—
who looks on the earth and it trembles,
who touches the mountains and they smoke.
I will sing to the LORD as long as I live;
I will sing praise to my God while I have being.

Hymn StF 11

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to
thee:
holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty,
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore thee,
casting down their golden crowns around the
glassy sea;
cherubim and seraphim falling down before
thee,
who wert, and art, and evermore shalt be.

Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide
thee,
though the sinful human eye thy glory may
not see,
only thou art holy; there is none beside thee,
perfect in power, in love, and purity.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!
All they works shall praise thy name in earth
and sky and sea;
holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty,
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Reginald Heber

Introduction

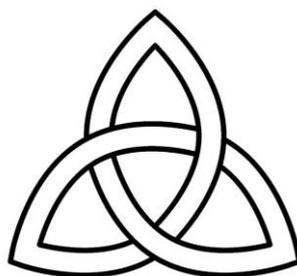
Today is Trinity Sunday and we think of God as three in one – always a bit tricky! During these last few weeks I have been invigilating exams and, whilst watching my charges, my mind has also been thinking about this. My thoughts became: God is like someone who's known you since birth, watched you grown and develop but isn't physically accessible at the moment, but they can talk with you, and they send invitations.

Prayers of Praise and Confession

On this Trinity Sunday we offer our thanks and praise to God the three in one; and to God for sending Jesus in human form so that he could relate to us, and for sending the Holy Spirit to be our comforter and guide. Our praise is for all three for being for us what we need at all times. And we offer our confession when we knowingly act against the Holy Trinity in our thoughts, words, and deeds, and we humbly bring our repentance, seeking forgiveness and hope that we can make amends and start again.

We bring these prayers in the name of the Trinity. Amen.

Lord's Prayer – please pray whichever version you prefer.



Hymn StF 17

With gladness we worship, rejoice as we sing,
free hearts and free voices how blessed to bring;
the old, thankful story shall scale thine abode,
thou King of all glory, most bountiful God.

Thy right would we give thee – true homage thy due,
and honour eternal, the universe through,
with all thy creation, earth, heaven and sea,
in one acclamation we celebrate thee.

Renewed by thy Spirit, redeemed by thy Son,
thy children revere thee for all thou hast done.

O Father! Returning to love and to light,
thy children are yearning to praise thee aright.

We join with the angels, and so there is given
from earth alleluia, in answer to heaven.
Amen! Be thou glorious below and above,
redeeming, victorious, and infinite Love!
George Rawson

John 16: 12 – 15

"I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

Romans 5: 1 – 5

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our afflictions, knowing that affliction produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

Reflection

The Trinity is always hard to explain – it took the early church around 400 years and three international councils to get there, not to mention the original disciples and apostles, the apostolic fathers and mothers, second century apologists and theologians, and third century lawyers and Gnostics muddying the waters.

In the 4th Century (AD 325) at the Council of Nicea, when conformity and compromise was needed to keep the early church together and growing, they gave us this creed – a sentence of God, a paragraph of Jesus and a mention of the Holy Spirit:

*We believe in one God Father Almighty Maker of all things, seen and unseen:
And in one Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God, begotten as only-begotten of the Father, that is of substance (ousia) of the Father, God from God, Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten not made, consubstantial (homoousios) with the Father, through whom all things came into existence, both things in heaven and things on earth: who for us men and for our salvation came down and was incarnate and became man, suffered and rose again on the third day, ascended into the heavens, is coming to judge the living and the dead:
And in the Holy Spirit.*

This obviously niggled because, just over 50 years later, there was the Council of Constantinople in AD 381, and the creed was expanded and clarified, and parts that were no longer needed were omitted:

*We believe in one God Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and all things, seen and unseen;
And in one Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God, the Only-begotten, begotten by his Father before all ages, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten not made,

consubstantial (homoousios) with the Father, through whom all things came into existence, who for us men and for our salvation came down from the heavens and became incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became a man, and was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate and suffered and was buried and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures and ascended into the heavens and is seated at the right hand of the Father and will come again to judge the living and the dead, and there will be no end to his kingdom;

And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Life-Giver, who proceeds from the Father, who is worshipped and glorified together with the Father and the Son, who spoke to the prophets;*

The third, and final creed from the council of Athanasius in approximately AD 430 (again about 50 years later) finally spoke of the Trinity as we now profess it:

We worship one God in the Trinity and the Trinity in unity, without either confusing the persons or dividing the substance; for the person of the Father is one, the Son's is another, the Holy Spirit's another; but the Godhead of Father, Son and Holy Spirit is one, their glory equal, their majesty equally eternal. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, such also the Holy Spirit; uncreated is the Father, uncreated the Son, uncreated the Holy Spirit; infinite is the Father, infinite the Son, infinite the Holy Spirit; eternal is the Father, eternal is the Son, eternal the Holy Spirit; yet they are not three eternal beings, but one eternal, just as they are not three uncreated beings or three infinite beings, but one uncreated and one infinite... Thus the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God; yet they are nor three gods but one God

If you're confused, you're not alone, and even if you spent a lifetime trying to figure it out and put it into words you would have less time than the above three councils.

So maybe you work it out in a way that makes sense to you.

For me,

God is like: there, always there, a constant, strong and capable presence.

Jesus is like: 'Hello'

'Hello Jesus, it's good to hear you.'

'It's good to hear you too. How are you today?'

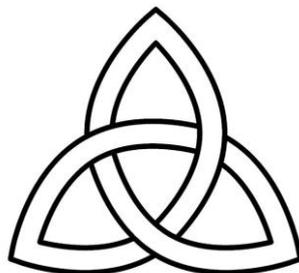
'Well, I've a few things on my mind'

'Tell me about them?'

And so prayer begins.

The Holy Spirit is like: here is an invitation, it's open-ended, starting from your birth and continuing forever; come and see. Come and join in, whenever you are ready, we're ready for you. It's an invitation that will turn your life around, in a good way. You are welcome, everyone is welcome, invite your friends and family too!

Somehow, this works in my head and my life – how does the Trinity make sense to you?



**taken from the book 'AD381 Heretics, Pagans and the Christian State' by Charles Freeman

Hymn StF 8

God with us: Creator, Father,
bringing everything to birth;
Mother of the whole creation,
fire of stars and life of earth:
down the countless years composing,
from the earth's evolving night,
love's response to love, and forming
mind and soul to seek your light.

God with us: Redeemer, Brother,
Friend for ever at our side,
here, in flesh, you walked among us,
taking up your cross, you died.
Crucified, despised, rejected,
Perfect Love, who shared our shame,
streaming from the cross, your judgement,
full of mercy, clears our name.

God with us: Unwearied Spirit,
from the birth of time and space,
surging through unconscious being,
joyful, Life-Creating Grace;
through the centuries you find us;
you, as God, inspire our prayer;
Life and Power at work within us,
Love for ever, everywhere!

God, Transcendent, far beyond us,
closest Friend, unfailing Guide:
through the ages, wronged, affronted,
in your poor, still crucified!
God with us: convict, forgive us;
by your holy love destroy
all that hinders peace and justice:
fill this aching world with joy!

Alan Gaunt

Prayers of Intercession (using StF 4 by Daniel Thambyrajah Niles)

Father in heaven,
grant to your children
mercy and blessing,
songs never ceasing,
love to unite us,
grace to redeem us –
Father in heaven,
Father our God.

Loving God, be with us always, as you promised, but especially with those of us going through difficult, lonely, unhealthy and poverty times. Help us to be there for each other too, to be a help in body, mind, and spirit, and to accept help too.

Jesus, Redeemer,
may we remember
your gracious passion,
your resurrection.
Worship we bring you,
praise we shall sing you –
Jesus, Redeemer,
Jesus our Lord.

Almighty Jesus, be with us always, as you promised, and talk to us as you did your disciples. Help those of us who doubt, are afraid, or feel unworthy to discern your will for us and understand our place in this, your world.

Spirit descending,
whose is the blessing,
strength for the weary,
help for the needy,
sealed in our kinship
yours be our worship –
Spirit descending,
Spirit adored.

Holy Spirit, be with us always, as you promised, and please keep inviting and encouraging all the people to enact your fruits of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control throughout all our lives. Amen,

Blessing

May the grace of God,
three in one,
be with us and remain with us,
always. Amen

