

Trinity Sunday Eucharist

I doubt many woke up this morning and cried: Hurrah its Trinity Sunday! Which is a pity because the Revelation of the Mystery of God as the Holy Blessed Trinity reveals not only truth and human hope but also is the very heart of salvation.

I want to offer three simple Latin tags to help us enter into the glory and mystery of God the Holy Blessed and undivided Trinity :

Cogito ergo sum

Tesco ergo sum

Amamus ergo sumus.

Cogito ergo sum. I think therefore I am – the philosophical foundation of classic western philosophy since Descartes. Descartes offered the Cogito as a basis for rational proof: I cannot doubt that I am thinking- therefore I exist – therefore I am able to relate to and comment on the reality of the world around me. And that's fine as far as it goes – but can prove destructive. The emphasis falls on the ego – the I. The classic definition of sin and hell is *being turned in on myself*. Hell is a personal choice – a choice of the ego where we so wrap ourselves in self as to be unable to relate to others or to God, which suggests that a culture premised on the ego heads for disaster..

A variation on the theme comes with Tesco ergo sum. OK, it's not real Latin but you get the point: I shop therefore I am. The Christian revelation tells us that together and individually we are made in the image of God. Which means that we all need faith, spirituality, a way to make sense of who we are and why we exist. One way or another we have to have God – or at least “a god” - in our lives. If reductionism tells us that faith and church and so on are mere folly then we fill the vacuum somehow, if need be with retail-therapy . A culture driven by the gods of consumerism bids us seek solace and find purpose in possession, profit and greed. Nothing wrong with shops and shopping,– but there needs to be more to life than Tesco's.

Which brings us to our third Latin tag : Amamus ergo sumus : we love therefore we are. We can't quite say Amo ergo sum – I love therefore I am – because I can only love in relationship. True love, rather than mere infatuation, needs more than me. Which takes us into the very heart of the Mystery of God the holy Blessed and undivided Trinity

The Mystery of the Holy Trinity lies beyond human language and understanding. What would you expect? God is not an idea or theory to be encapsulated in words and explained in picture language. The revelation of God the Blessed Trinity comes not from human thought but from the Love of the Father revealed in Christ through the Holy Spirit.

God the Father –God above and beyond; God holy, separate, other, the Mystery in which the whole cosmos is held, God approached only in awe, reverence, adoration and holy fear – this God, this Reality is made flesh and dwells among us.

God who is Christ – God, the Word made flesh, God who brings healing, wholeness, forgiveness, salvation; God incarnate is both with us and for us and sends upon us the Holy Spirit.

God the Spirit – the breath of God, the creative love of God, the warm flame of God, making humanity in the image of God, poured out upon the church that we may be the priestly people of God in worship, witness, intercession and service – God within us.

God above us, God for us, God within us- three persons, one God.

We understand “person” to equate with individual - isolated, separate, alone. Maybe that imagery is at the heart of much current western malaise: loneliness, prejudice, racism, homophobia, selfishness, greed, lust. True personhood is not the same as isolated individualism. True personhood exists in relationship, in mutual, co-affirming love. True personhood is outgoing, joyful, creative, dynamic, salvific. True personhood is the reality of God the Holy and Blessed Trinity- the heart of all things: community, mutual love, outpouring praise : God above us, God for us, God within us.

God above us, God for us, God within us. The way to humanity lies through God. The way to God lies through humanity. Trinity Sunday celebrates the Mystery of the Love of God and reveals our vocation to justice, to community, to care, to love.

God above us, God for us, God within us. Ultimately God’s self revelation as Trinity must bring us to our knees in reverent awe, fear and adoration:

Only Thou art holy; there is none beside Thee, Perfect in power, in love, and purity.

Such prayer, given by God, restores in us the image of God who is Holy Trinity. A story from the days of the desert fathers and mothers says it all:

Abba Lot went to Abba Joseph and said: “Abba, as far as I can, I keep a moderate rule, with a little fasting, and prayer, and meditation, and quiet: and as far as I can I try to cleanse my heart of evil thoughts. What else should I do?” Then the old man rose, and spread out his hands to heaven, and his fingers shone like ten candles: and he said: “If you will, you can become all flame.”