

Trinity Sunday

Trinity Sunday celebrates the way we know God in the Christian Church: as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. So the passages from the Bible which are read today focus on the ways in which we know and understand God

Isaiah 40.12-17, 27-31

Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand
and marked off the heavens with a span,
enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure,
and weighed the mountains in scales
and the hills in a balance?

Who has directed the spirit of the LORD,
or as his counsellor has instructed him?

Whom did he consult for his enlightenment,
and who taught him the path of justice?

Who taught him knowledge,
and showed him the way of understanding?

Even the nations are like a drop from a bucket,
and are accounted as dust on the scales;
see, he takes up the isles like fine dust.

Lebanon would not provide fuel enough,
nor are its animals enough for a burnt-offering.

All the nations are as nothing before him;
they are accounted by him as less than nothing and emptiness.

Why do you say, O Jacob,
and speak, O Israel,

'My way is hidden from the LORD,
and my right is disregarded by my God'?

Have you not known? Have you not heard?

The LORD is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.

He does not faint or grow weary;
his understanding is unsearchable.

He gives power to the faint,
and strengthens the powerless.

Even youths will faint and be weary,
and the young will fall exhausted;

**but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength,
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,
they shall run and not be weary,
they shall walk and not faint.**

What's going on?

This passage of Isaiah concentrates on God the Creator of all. We are given a picture of an 'everlasting God' who has made 'the ends of the earth'. God is active and dynamic, measuring and marking off the details of the Creation. God is not only everlasting but extensive, whole lands are like a droplet in God's eyes. This eternal and great God is to be considered Lord of all, but beyond this, God is faithful, incomprehensibly wise and utterly committed to all that he has made. In this God we can trust, - and he will give us strength. This passage therefore gives us a glimpse of the huge tracts of space and time in which God works, and yet this is a God we can search for and find and who cares about what happens to us.

Psalm 8

Divine Majesty and Human Dignity

To the leader: according to The Gittith. A Psalm of David.

**O LORD, our Sovereign,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!**

**You have set your glory above the heavens.
Out of the mouths of babes and infants
you have founded a bulwark because of your foes,
to silence the enemy and the avenger.**

**When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars that you have established;
what are human beings that you are mindful of them,
mortals that you care for them?**

**Yet you have made them a little lower than God,
and crowned them with glory and honour.
You have given them dominion over the works of your hands;
you have put all things under their feet,
all sheep and oxen,**

**and also the beasts of the field,
the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea,
whatever passes along the paths of the seas.**

**O LORD, our Sovereign,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!**

What's going on?

This passage also thanks God in wonder for the majesty and glory of the Creation. The psalmist is amazed that with a whole glorious universe revealed by the stars, God still cares for little human beings. The psalmist also refers to our place in the created order, lower than God but tremendously gifted by him. Our task then is to recognise our responsibility to those animals, birds and fish which share our planet and to use the gifts that God has given us to maintain the order and beauty of the Creation.

This psalm therefore also focuses on our relationship with the Creator and on the privileges and tasks which has been given to us by God. But a spiritual question for us today is: have we taken on that responsibility? Have we properly shouldered that task? Do we make it known by our care for the Creation that the Lord's name is majestic in all the earth?

2 Corinthians 13.11-13

Final Greetings and Benediction

Finally, brothers and sisters, farewell. Put things in order, listen to my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.

What's going on?

This short passage is used to remind us that St Paul offered his friends a blessing in the name of the Holy Trinity. Jesus offers us grace for salvation and holy life, God the Father pours out his love on us and the

world and the Holy Spirit binds us in fellowship and community. This is what St Paul wants for his friends. The new church will know and experience God in each of these different ways and it will strengthen them (as in the first reading) and help them to endure.

This final blessing in the name of the Trinity is often used in other prayers, services and gatherings in the Church today.

Matthew 28.16-20

The Commissioning of the Disciples

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'

What's going on?

This passage reminds us that the way we understand God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, was referred to by Jesus himself. When Jesus commissions his disciples and sends them out to do his work, he tells them explicitly to baptise new believers in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Therefore, when the disciples share their faith and made new converts to the Christian faith, they would also offer this insight about the nature of God and the way that we can have relationship with God.

Another way in which the Trinity is sometimes understood is as God as Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer. God is the Creator of all as we have seen in the first two readings, Jesus has redeemed human beings and made it possible for everyone to enter into life with God, and the Holy Spirit sustains the Creation, helping human beings to do God's will and to create loving, mutually helpful communities. The Trinity is therefore not just a description of God but an explanation of how God interrelates with everyone.