



Sunday 7th June 2020

Trinity Sunday

**The Beacon Parishes Mission Community of Ipplepen with Torbryan,
Denbury, Broadhempston and Woodland**

FIRST READING

Isaiah 40.12-17, 27-End

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.

PSALM

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!

SECOND READING

2 Corinthians 13.11-End

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.

GOSPEL

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.'

Reflection for Trinity Sunday 2020 by Reverend Anne Burden

Today is Trinity Sunday - a major festival of the church - but one which makes very few of us jump up and down with excitement! The reason - probably - is that we struggle to understand what Trinity is all about. We're familiar with prayers ending with a reference to "Father, Son and Holy Spirit" - and we can say "Three persons in one God" and "Three in One and One in Three". But what does this mean for our faith, and what does it tell us of the God we seek to love and serve?

Preachers often turn themselves upside down to try to explain Trinity - and no doubt many of you remember sermon illustrations of clover leaves, three-legged stools, Celtic triangles etc (Just Google 'Celtic triangles' - and you'll see what I mean!) My favourite illustration is probably 'water' - a bowl of ice cubes, a glass of tap water and a boiling kettle. All different, but all water. It gives a glimpse of Trinity - maybe - but like any illustration - think about it too much, and the meaning evaporates like steam from the kettle.

A short poem might take the image of 'water' to another level

*A cool drink, steam rising from the kettle, a mountain stream,
Niagara, the Ganges, a village pond:
waves breaking on the shore, the ever-restless oceans, frozen polar regions,
towering cumulus clouds, a shower of rain.*

*All these are water, signified by the formula H²O;
But the formula cannot begin to describe the multi-faceted truth
of water in all its forms, with all its life-giving properties.*

*So with the Trinity Three in One and One in Three;
a useful formula;
but beyond lies the majesty, the wonder, the power, the justice,
the creativity, the beauty, the love and the rescuing
- the breath-taking otherness that we so inadequately call God.*

I think it's clear that we need more than brain power to grasp the meaning of Trinity. We need imagination and creativity and life-experience - as well as open hearts, minds and spirits. We need to be open to God and to the glimpses he gives us from time to time and in different ways. Glimpses of who he is and how he interacts with us. Because if we allow ourselves to be swept up with God - in relationship with him - we can start to grasp the meaning of Trinity in a way we can never learn solely from a theological book or an expert sermon.

So don't worry about not "understanding" what Trinity means. We never can. What I offer you instead are the words which follow - which you may like to use as part of your prayer and worship and praise:-

*No words, living God, can describe you, define you, capture you.
You are more than all human language; beyond human understanding.
Yet we glimpse you in the majesty of the universe;
we sense you in the wonder of birth; we feel you in the beauty of nature.
Then in Jesus you show us your face, clearer than we ever deserved;
a face which smiles upon us, eyes which weep with us,
lips which speak forgiveness, arms which reach out to welcome us.
And that's just the beginning.
You never stop disclosing your purpose to us.
By your Spirit you move among us, producing unity and community,
gifts of faith, hope and love*
*For all of this - God who is Trinity - we worship you and praise your holy name.
Amen*