



## **Trinity Sunday**

### **Homily**

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St Mary's Cathedral Parish House  
Sunday 7 June, 2020

During the last eleven weeks of restrictions, and the closure and limited use of our churches, our civil leaders have been repeating the line that we are in and will continue to be in, the 'new normal'.

What immediately comes to my mind when I hear these words, is that as a community we will have recovered the basics, like good hygiene: washing hands regularly and being careful not to transmit viruses and bacterial infections by staying at home, and not soldiering on when in the grips of a cold or flu.

When the normality of us being able to return to our parish churches comes, we will all have to ensure that we take all precautions, in charity, to safeguard one another. Let's remember that our obligation to go to Mass on the weekend is suspended while we are suffering the flu or some other contagious illness. Some people have thought that the new normal is something much deeper. I have listened to some say that the COVID crisis will have brought about deeper changes in people. Might people, after this crisis, become kinder, more considerate, be less selfish and concerned for themselves, and more community oriented? It is my hope that something like COVID can make us all take stock of our priorities and even our values.

Our reflections today, on Trinity Sunday, arise from the great mystery of God, who is One God in a Trinity of one substance, as we will hear in the Preface of the Eucharistic Prayer. The mystery of the nature and unity of God, will always be intriguing to us, and we shall never be able to fully comprehend it, but we can certainly appreciate the God's love that motivated the revelation.

I was reading recently that the feast of the Trinity draws together the great preceding feasts of the Resurrection at Easter, the Ascension and Pentecost. The author reminded me that the Resurrection really focusses on the Father as the life-giving one, the Ascension on Jesus the vindicated and exalted one, and Pentecost on the Holy Spirit as the empowering one.

Trinity Sunday is where a community of the faithful come together to celebrate the power of the Holy Spirit that creates the community in the image and likeness of the perfect community, the Trinity.



Community is essential to people. It is in our DNA to seek to belong to all sorts of communities. From the first moments of bonding that occurs when our mother takes us and holds us close to her heart, we begin developing the great series of connections with others throughout life. These connections are meant to be life-giving and life-sustaining.

It is not that surprising to discover that we are encoded to seek belonging in community, when we realise that we are created in the image and likeness of God, who is a community of persons.

The Word of God puts before us the Good News in Psalm 86 that God is tender and compassionate, slow to anger, rich in kindness and faithfulness. Being this way, God is consistently reaching out, inviting us to live in God's presence, to act more and more like God so that society will be more just and merciful.

The mercy and patience of God has always been tested. One occasion was when Moses received the stone tablets with the Commandments. At that very moment, the people in the camp, who had waited for Moses to return from the meeting with God, created the Golden Calf, their image of God. Everything had been reversed by them.

They fashioned God from their own ideas of what and how God should be. In other words, God was created in their image and likeness. When Moses saw what had happened, and how unfaithful the people were, he threw the stone tablets down, breaking them. He later returned to the mountain and received a new set of tablets, experiencing the mercy and compassion of, and reconciliation with God, who wanted to let the people know the joy of living in communion with their God.

And so the story goes on, from the beginning to today. The question will always be: Who is the God in our lives? Do I accept that I am the creature of God, made in the image and likeness of God, or do I want to decide what will be the god in my life: the god on my own terms?

The Word on this feast also reminds us of the remarkable deed of love of the Father. God sends the perfect image of divinity, the Son, in our image and likeness. The gospel writer, John, repeatedly taught that to see the Son was to see the Father. John knew from his own experience how to be more like the image of God.

He had discovered through really hearing Jesus that he was in need of being remade, and for this to happen he needed Jesus to judge him, to help him see that he needed to become so much more as a Christian.

John's advice to the Christian community is accept the gift of God's grace that alone has the power to transform and make us like Christ. The Holy Spirit, the empowering one, is sent to work within us, remaking us in the image of Christ, who is the perfect image of the Father.



The Christian community is a miracle of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit firstly forms us, then sustains us. And the Spirit transforms us so that the church may be truly and more obviously the image of Christ in the world.

This, to me, would be the new normal.