

*And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me."*

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It may seem to you that a Sunday celebrating the Trinity is the oddest of all Sundays. After having spent the past six months keeping Sundays that have celebrated events in our Lord's life, like His birth or the visit of the Wise Men or His triumphant entry into Jerusalem and His glorious Resurrection; after six months of observing events in our Lord's earthly life, today we celebrate nothing other than the fact of God's life as Trinity.

We celebrate today the Scriptural revelation of God's eternal existence as three persons: three persons existing forever as one God; and one God existing forever as three persons. We celebrate today the Scriptural account of the Father's relationship with the Son; and the Son's relationship with the Father; a relationship of reciprocal love; a love which is personified in the life of the Spirit; a relationship wherein they love each other fully and completely; a relationship in which the Son returns the Father's love in perfect balance.

But all of that may seem completely irrelevant from the struggles and challenges of everyday life. Let's be honest, what does it mean to us in practical terms to say that God exists as Trinity? What does it mean to say that the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit are co-equal and co-eternal? What does it mean to say that they have no beginning or end; that there is no greater or lesser in their Divine Life?

Does the fact that God exist as Trinity, and the fact that we celebrate the doctrine of the Trinity this morning, make any difference at all in the give and take and the ups and downs, of real life?

We may want simple answers to our questions about God, but such yearnings run headlong into this morning's commemoration of Trinity Sunday.

But the fact is, such yearnings run headlong into life itself, which is far more complex, far more nuanced, than simple answers will allow.

It's likely that the doctrine of the Trinity suffers because of its fundamental incomprehensibility. It's difficult stuff to even begin to understand. Because of the obvious difficulty of understanding the mystery of the Trinity; because of the inherent impossibility of knowing with any precision what we mean when we speak of God as three persons, there is a natural tendency to ignore it. We can't really completely know, so we try not to think about it at all. We acknowledge it when we say the Creed, but we seldom go much further than that.

And yet, the Doctrine of the Trinity is even more relevant than we can imagine, not just for what it says about God but for what it says about us.

The Doctrine of the Trinity tells us that God exists as a community of love.

His own nature, his own existence, is relational: the Father loving the Son; and the Son loving the Father, and that union of love existing eternally as the Spirit. continually flowing and moving from one to the other.

In other words, living in relationship is in God's own nature; and it is, of course, our nature too; because we've been created in his image.

Socially and culturally there are two great extremes by which humanity views itself. All too often we identify the person with the individual - someone who stands independent of those around them. We see ourselves as distinct and isolated creatures, rightfully making our own choices, regardless of what effect those choices will have on those around us; regardless of our responsibilities to others. And we have the profound social fragmentation of our time to show for it: so-called freedom convoys are just the latest example of where all of that will take us. It's my life, as if some how I created myself; as if some how who I am and what I do has not been shaped and formed by all those who've had some impact of me.

But just as dangerously, some have emphasized the opposite extreme; that is, the need to abandon all individualism, to destroy the sense of individual uniqueness in pursuit of the collective security.

But the doctrine of the Trinity tells us something else; not just about God but about ourselves. Because God exists as three persons, each operating individually as much as they as they co-exist; because God exists as the true balance of the individual and the collective, we too need to balance both parts.

Like God, and because we are made in His image, we are inherently relational.

We live to live in relationship with each other.

Like God, we exist in relationships which need to be marked by love.

But we do so as persons, as those whose fundamental equally requires respect and honour for our differences.

The failure of all political and economic systems arises because of their inability to understand humanity as people made in God's image; and because of their inability to understand God as Trinity; as three persons, co-existing in love.

But the problem is not limited to politics or economics.

It happens all the time in our lives: whenever we see ourselves outside of our relationships; whenever we insist on our own way, our own wishes, our own desires, regardless of our responsibilities, we fail to grasp our own fundamental nature; we fail to acknowledge our inherent inner-connectedness.

Whenever we refuse to share love beyond the limits of our own lives; whenever we withhold the love which God has shared with us, we dishonour the image in which God has made us; the image which is stamped on us in baptism.

The Trinity is what we mean when we say, as we do over and over again, that God is love; and in saying that God is love, that God is Trinity, in the process we understand better who we are, as those who have been made in the image of God.

So, when your heart breaks for children who hunger; and for people who live in the midst of injustice and violence; when you reach out to a friend who is fighting an addiction; or a family member who is struggling with a spouse or a child; you are living out the image of the Trinity; the image of love always active, always caring; the image of love always reaching out to share life with others.

That's who God is. That's who we are. Images of the Trinity.

Because, the chances are that no matter how often we celebrate Trinity Sunday, for most, Trinity will be little more than a word on a page, until they see the image of the Trinity, the image of love, in the flesh and blood image that they see in us. as those called by God to be the image of God in all the moments of our lives.