

Trinity Sunday

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

These words begin our worship services and are found at the end of 2 Corinthians.

Paul's letters to the Corinthians are turbulent. He was concerned about the community and divisions within it. He urged them to care for one another and to remain faithful. Paul's relationship with the Corinthians was one of spiritual closeness and painful separation.

Today's reading ends his letter. Scholars believe that 2 Corinthians was originally 2 separate letters and were written around 54 to 55. Today's reading wrapped up the larger document.

This section of the letter is read today - Trinity Sunday because of the nature of the final benediction. Paul's final words to the Corinthians has been used as a foundational text to develop the doctrine of the Trinity.

The word Trinity is not found in scripture.

Today is a challenging day to preach. Today we have the one day in the liturgical calendar to ponder the nature of God. To try to explain the unexplainable. How do we understand God's nature as unity in 3 in 1. It is difficult to figure out how Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier can be real. Our what about the other words we use? Father, Son, Holy Spirit? Love, Beloved, Lover, Fountain, The Rock, Our light?

Our words are not enough.

We quickly get bogged down in paradox and mystery.

Where did the idea of the Trinity begin?

It did not come from the great theologians. It came from regular people.

It came about when ordinary people talked about how they experienced God and the mystery of the Holy One in their lives. How they experienced the reality of the Divine in their lives.

Then with this understanding people turned to theologians and scholars to explain how it all worked together and how it was reflected in the stories in the Bible.

Today is the day we may be tempted to try to explain the Trinity. Some people will use analogies or examples like a 3 legged stool or the 3 leaf clover that St Patrick used. I have used a tricycle! But explaining the Trinity is not the

point. Trusting the presence and power of the triune God is.

We should not spend our energy trying to discover the best way to explain a mystery that cannot be explained with only our words. Our hearts are needed instead. Our hearts know. Our experiences of the Divine show us how the unity works.

One of my favourite authors as a young person was Madelaine L'Engle she wrote a sci fi series. The third book in the series - A Swiftly Tilting Planet has a Trinitarian theme. The main character - Charles Wallace continually recites the prayer of St Patrick - or better known as St Patrick's breastplate as he experiences a struggle between good and evil.

This is the shortened version of the prayer.

INSERT PRAYER

Madelaine L'Engle is not alone in using ancient traditions, liturgy or faith in fiction writing - I am sure you could think of many many more.

Today on Trinity Sunday perhaps it is enough for us to know that we do not have to rely on words to try to explain

God. Instead we can know these things, ponder these things in our hearts. Think about how you have experienced God. And soon as we move into communion we will know God in the breaking of the bread.

AMEN