

Trinity Sunday

Today is Trinity Sunday. And the gospel brought before us - one of the versions of the Great Commission of Jesus in which Jesus himself brings all three persons of the Trinity together. Jesus says, 'go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit'.

Trinity has been a controversial subject from the early times of the Church. Because we do not find the word 'Trinity' in the Bible - but we find the concept.

So this doctrine of Trinity has emerged in the Church gradually. One of the first Trinitarian expressions has appeared at the end of the first century – and it was from St Clement of Rome (the Patron Saint of this Church). In his epistle he writes, 'Do we not have one God, and one Christ, and one gracious Spirit....?' (1 Clement 46:6). And in AD 325, the first Council of Nicaea adopted the Nicene Creed. It described Christ as 'God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made' – and used the phrase 'of one substance' with the Father. In the Creed the 'Holy Ghost' is the one by which was incarnate... of the Virgin Mary'. This Creed was expanded later, at the First Council of Constantinople (AD 381), by saying that the Holy Spirit is worshiped and glorified together with the Father and the Son, suggesting that the Holy Spirit is also of the same substance or essence of - God the Creator & the Son.

When we talk about God.... we are talking about a power that our human intellect cannot fully comprehend. God who created everything - is not limited by, affected by, or even can be understood in terms of time, space, and matter.

To understand it we may compare God with the person who made this microphone. I think I once mentioned this example. The person who made this microphone was not making it from inside this microphone. Similarly, the God who created this universe was not creating it just from inside the universe... and thus cannot be contained in this universe, or even fully understood.

The person who made this microphone is not running around here switching on this equipment and changing the volume and all... the manufacturer left this equipment with us... same as the God who created this universe has entrusted its care... with us.

Gen. 1:1 says, '**In the beginning** God created'. That means, before the beginning of time God was there. Time starts **WITH** 'that beginning'. So when the Bible says 'in the beginning'... it is about the beginning of time (**creation** of time).... And when Bible says, God created **heaven**... 'its about **space**' (**creation** of space)... and when the Bible says, God created the **earth**... 'it is **matter**' (**creation** of matter)... So, this first verse of the Bible tells us about the beginning of time, space, and matter...

But in this first verse of the Bible... we **do not** find the explanation on how the other **two** persons of the Trinity came into being.

But there we read that 'the **Spirit of God** was hovering over the waters'. That means, the Holy Spirit's was with God in that beginning itself. It was the Spirit that changed the chaos into cosmos.

And in Colossians Ch 1 Paul says in verse 15 'The Son is the image of the invisible God, the **firstborn** over all **creation**. He is before all things'. That means, before heaven and earth were created the Son was with God. And St John also says the same thing: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God (1:1). '...In him all things were created'. St John here speaks of the same Word of God that was heard at the beginning, 'Let there be light'. And that is the Word, the **Eternal Word** - 'the **logos**' who incarnated in Jesus.

At the time of incarnation – again we find all three persons together: God is sending God's Son; Mary was conceived by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1.35) and thus 'the Word became flesh' (John 1.14). So, all three persons together.

Again, at the time of Jesus's baptism: we find God in that scene - saying, 'This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!' – and the Holy Spirit descending in the form of a dove – so all three persons coming together.

And at the time of redemption: If we read Hebrews 9.14 – we find Jesus offering himself on the cross, the Holy Spirit inspiring and strengthening Jesus – and God the creator receiving that sacrifice.

People have tried to understand this formula of the Trinity through different illustrations.

One example is water. Water is revealed in three forms – liquid, ice and steam (liquid, solid and gas). Yet all three have the same chemical formula H_2O .

Another example is light: red heat rays that are invisible - picturing the Father; yellow light rays that are seen - picturing the Son; blue chemical rays that are seen by their effects - picturing the Spirit.

Alban Douglas, a theologian explains it in his way. He says, 'I am only one person but I can be revealed as three persons. My mother sees me as a son. She sees me differently from anyone else and I respond to her in a way that is different from my response to others. My children see me as a father with all that involves. The class sees me as a teacher which is a different relationship. I remain one person but I am revealed as a son, father and teacher at the same time. And he says, like that God is one indivisible God revealed in three separate persons.

Though none of these illustrations can possibly explain everything, these illustrations can guide us in limited ways.

However, being Christians... the disciples of Jesus... we need to have the same focus in our worship as of Lord, who said.... 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God' (Jn. 20:17). So our worship, as evident in our liturgy, is - worshipping 'God the Father/Creator', through Christ Jesus, the Son - in the Holy Spirit'. May the Spirit of God continue to speak to us – and lead our thoughts to fuller understanding, Amen.