



## TRINITY SUNDAY SUNDAY, JUNE 7<sup>TH</sup>, 2020

### THE TRINITY GOD AS THE MODEL FOR COMMUNITY



Rublev: "The Trinity"

**Andrei Rublev was born in the 1360s, he died between 1427-1430 in Moscow and is considered to be one of the greatest medieval Russian painters of Orthodox icons and frescos. The only work authenticated as entirely his, is the icon of the Trinity above.(c. 1410, currently in the Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow). It is based on an earlier icon known as the "Hospitality of Abraham" (illustrating Genesis 18). Rublev removed the figures of Abraham and Sarah from the scene, and through a subtle use of composition and symbolism changed the subject to focus on the Mystery of the Trinity.**

These last two weeks, we have focused upon Ascension Sunday and Pentecost, while applying the insights of each to National Reconciliation Week, and today we reflect upon Trinity. The meaning of these Sundays is difficult to isolate, because they represent either biblical stories which are in themselves mysterious (Ascension and Pentecost), or doctrinal, which seems so abstract (Trinity: God as Three in One).

On Ascension Sunday, the point was that Jesus leaves his followers, so they can 'get on with the job' with his guidance but not his interference. In other words, Christians are free to live in the Spirit, and in doing so, to make the calls, to call the shots. That appears to be an extraordinary freedom that God entrusts to us, but it is never synonymous with libertarianism – doing what we want. If you think carefully about it, the gift of freedom from God, requires extraordinary insight, awareness and maturity, if it is to be interpreted and lived out responsibly. Pentecost, was about language. The point being that there is no 'divine' God-preferred language, although colonial powers have historically behaved as if there were. Pentecost is the great leveller, where all language is of equal status, because the Spirit speaks through all of them. This led to a discussion between Colin and me about the indigenous desire, a reasonable and necessary desire, to recover their own languages as a fundamental mark of their freedom.

Today, Trinity, we learn that God is not simply One, but "Three in One". In short, God is a community, a community of equals (Father, Son and Holy Spirit), who work co-operatively in the world. In Christian theology, God talks and communicates within Himself (the immanent Trinity) and also with us (the economic Trinity). This idea of God as community carries meaning as we think about our own communities, currently torn asunder.

## GATHERING

### Preparation:

We accompany the pianist, singing several times as a mantra  
 “Veni Creator – Come Creator Spirit” (TiS 750, Jacques Berthier)

Veni Creator

Veni Creator

Veni Creator Spiritus

### Invitation to Worship

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

The Lord be with you

***And also with you***

### We light the Paschal Candle

We light the candle celebrating the Trinity:

Father, Son and Spirit,

through whom God shows us how to live together.

### Hymn: Christ be our light (Bernadette Farrell)

Longing for light, we wait in darkness.

Longing for truth, we turn to you.

Make us your own, your holy people,

Light for the world to see.

***Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.***

***Shine through the darkness.***

***Christ, be our light! Shine in your Church***

***Gathered today.***

Longing for peace, our world is troubled.

Longing for hope, many despair.

Your word alone has power to save us

Make us your living voice.

***Chorus***

Longing for food, many are hungry.  
 Longing for water, many still thirst.  
 Make us your bread, broken for others,  
 Shared until all are fed.

***Chorus***

Longing for shelter people are homeless.  
 Longing for warmth, many are cold.  
 Make us your building, sheltering others,  
 Walls made of living stone.

***Chorus***

Many the gifts, many the people,  
 Many the hearts that yearn to belong.  
 Let us be servants to one another,  
 Making your kingdom come.

***Chorus***

**Prayer for Trinity: God of Surprises**

In this meditation, I try to point to God's counter-intuitive way of being and operating. At heart, God is not just about community, *God is community*. God is not as we are prone to think, a solitary white haired and bearded man in the heavens, handing down judgments – albeit wise ones – a Gandalf like figure (Lord of the Rings) - but instead, a creative neighbourhood, a commune, a co-operative, as suggested by Rublev – see the icon on the front page)

Trinity is less a doctrine than a poem, free verse, a cosmic love gift  
 Sending sound waves through earth  
 Hurling speech into the cosmos

***Stirring radio waves to hum***

Trinity is a dream  
 we and God have  
 about the human and the divine,  
 the matrix of connections

***between the common and the sacred***

Trinity is a counter-intuitive beat of the music,  
 syncopated melody lines  
 as sonorous as whales, pulsars and seismic waves

***all held in tension***

But we struggle with God's free utterance in indelible ink.  
 We analyse God with precision,  
***and we force the messy beautiful melodies  
 into straight boring lines.***

And just when we think we have finished the job,  
 ordering our world according to our own lights  
 Trinity finds new allies, new friends to work and play with,  
 even beyond the Church  
***And dances out the door  
 finding willing partners with whom to swirl***

## **The Peace**

## **Introduction**

### **LET'S HEAR THE WORD**

#### **Some Clues about the Trinity and what it says about Community and Relationships**

Trinitarian life is also our life...There is one life of the Triune God, a life in which we graciously have been included as partners... a comprehensive plan of God reaching from creation to consummation, in which God and all creatures are destined to exist together in the mystery of love and communion.

**Catherine Mowry LaCugna**

**"God for Us", quoted from Ruth Burrow's "Essence of Prayer"**

The doctrine of the Trinity means that relationship, that fellowship, that togetherness and sharing, that self-giving and other-centeredness rather than self-centredness, are not afterthoughts with God, but the deepest truth about the very being of God. The Father is not consumed with Himself; He loves the Son and the Spirit. And the Son is not riddled with narcissism; he loves his Father and the Spirit. And the Spirit is not preoccupied with Herself and her own glory; the Spirit loves the Father and the Son.

**C. Baxter Kruger**

All sorts of people are fond of repeating the Christian statement that "God is love." But they seem not to notice that the words 'God is love' have no real meaning unless God contains at least two persons. Love is something that one person has for another person. If God were a single person, then before the world was made, He was not love."

**C.S. Lewis**

**The readings for Trinity vary according to whether we are in years A, B or C of the Revised Common Lectionary. This year is Year A, but I would like to bring together what I consider the best of the readings for Trinity, across the three-year cycle.**

### **The Collect for Trinity**

Father, we praise you:  
 through your Word and Holy Spirit, you created all things.  
 You reveal your salvation in all the world  
 by sending your Son to us, Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh.  
 Through your Holy Spirit  
 you give us a share in your life and love.  
 Fill us with the vision of your glory,  
 that we may always serve and praise you,  
 Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
 One God, for ever and ever.

### **Proverbs 8:1-11, 22-23, 30-31 - Wisdom: The Secret of Living Well**

Proverbs is one of the 'Writings' or books of wisdom literature in the Hebrew Bible. It consists of collections of sayings or proverbs, most of which are couched as teaching for a young man to find his way in life. As the other wisdom books of Job, Ecclesiastes, and some psalms, Proverbs sees wisdom as surpassing the boundaries of Hebrew culture. It draws on sayings from the surrounding cultures, especially collections from Egypt. In the passage from chapter 8, set down for today, Trinity Sunday, wisdom is personified as Woman Wisdom (or 'lady wisdom', as the older commentaries suggest). The passage concludes with a sense of delight in the dance of creation, as wisdom rejoices in God's creativity and what has been created: the world and all that is in it, including humanity.

Does not wisdom call,  
 and does not understanding raise her voice?

<sup>2</sup>On the heights, beside the way,  
 at the crossroads she takes her stand;

<sup>3</sup>beside the gates in front of the town,  
 at the entrance of the portals she cries out:

<sup>4</sup>"To you, O people, I call,  
 and my cry is to all that live.

<sup>5</sup>O simple ones, learn prudence;  
 acquire intelligence, you who lack it.  
<sup>6</sup>Hear, for I will speak noble things,  
 and from my lips will come what is right;  
<sup>7</sup>for my mouth will utter truth;  
 wickedness is an abomination to my lips.  
<sup>8</sup>All the words of my mouth are righteous;  
 there is nothing twisted or crooked in them.  
<sup>9</sup>They are all straight to one who understands  
 and right to those who find knowledge.  
<sup>10</sup>Take my instruction instead of silver,  
 and knowledge rather than choice gold;  
<sup>11</sup>for wisdom is better than jewels,  
 and all that you may desire cannot compare with her.  
<sup>22</sup>The LORD created me at the beginning of his work,  
 the first of his acts of long ago.  
<sup>23</sup>Ages ago I was set up,  
 at the first, before the beginning of the earth.  
<sup>30</sup>then I was beside him, like a master worker;  
 and I was daily his delight,  
 rejoicing before him always,  
<sup>31</sup>rejoicing in his inhabited world  
 and delighting in the human race.

### **Psalm 8 (Authorized King James Version) Read Responsively**

Psalm 8 speaks of God as creator and so lends itself appropriately to Trinity Sunday readings. It is a short psalm of praise to God as creator with every single verse addressed to God. It has some similar expressions to Genesis 1 with which it is connected in the cycle of readings. One can easily imagine the psalmist gazing at the night sky and finding it both an exhilarating and a humbling experience. And yet, for some reason, God is deeply concerned with these particular creatures – human beings, although not to the exclusion of other creatures – giving them dominion, which means power *with* responsibility and accountability.

O LORD our Lord, how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth!  
 who hast set thy glory above the heavens.

***<sup>2</sup> Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings  
 hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies,  
 that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.***

<sup>3</sup>When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers,  
 the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

***<sup>4</sup> what is man, that thou art mindful of him?  
 and the son of man, that thou visitest him?***

<sup>5</sup> For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels,  
and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

<sup>6</sup> ***Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands;***

***thou hast put all things under his feet:***

<sup>7</sup> all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field;

<sup>8</sup> the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea,

*and whatsoever* passeth through the paths of the seas.

<sup>9</sup> ***O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!***

### **Romans 8:12-17 (New Revised Standard Version)**

Paul plays with the notions of slavery and freedom. For us these are symbols. For Paul's hearers they are also symbols, but related to a reality much closer to home. Slavery meant fear. Slavery meant having no rights of inheritance. It meant no hope. The opposite is to be free, to belong to the family either by birth or adoption, and so to have an inheritance. The application is clear enough. Christ is Son of God. We have been adopted to become his brothers and sisters. We will share in his inheritance. The hope which keeps Paul going is not simply a belief about the far off (or even near) future. It is already something of a present reality. For Paul, the Spirit is a component of future hope which has already been given. Elsewhere he speaks of it as a down-payment or advance instalment. For some, that meant, the Spirit brought the reward of success. For Paul, it meant something different. It was much more personal and much less materialistic. Its focus was not things, but a personal relationship. So, Paul uses family language, in that the Spirit brings a sense of belonging. He connects it to the confidence of knowing that one is a child of God. The love which is at the heart of the good news invites us to belong. Paul is celebrating that sense of belonging. Just as we might be aghast where families are focused on greed and inheritance, so, here, family and belonging matters most and does not play second fiddle to inheritance.

Going back further towards the beginning of our passage, we see that Paul is contrasting two ways of living. He has just described the change which comes over people when they open themselves to the radical love of which the gospel speaks. As Christ died and rose, so people will make a similar major shift when they respond to this love - from death to life, ultimately to life associated with the renewal of all things, but for Paul also life in the here and now. This has been his argument with those who fear that the only way to change people is to insist on fulfilment of the commandments and that any questioning or undermining of them foils any hope of human goodness.

<sup>12</sup> So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh— <sup>13</sup>for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. <sup>14</sup>For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. <sup>15</sup>For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, "Abba! Father!" <sup>16</sup>it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, <sup>17</sup>and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint

heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

### **John 3:1-17 (Good News Translation)**

This reading is used on Trinity Sunday in the Church Lectionary because it suggests God as three-in-one, even though that suggestion is subtle. Let us recall that even by the time of the final version of John's Gospel, the latest Gospel, the Doctrine of the Trinity had not yet developed in Christian teaching in an explicit way. This was not formalized until the 4<sup>th</sup> century. In this reading we hear that Nicodemus is exposed to a new idea which is shattering. It is that the old religious thinking and rules have changed. It is not enough to claim loyalty to the blood line of Judaism; at its worst a type of exclusionary religiously based racism, but instead, it is necessary to be *born from above*. In other words, the old historical certitudes have been abolished and rewritten. This reading is a little like the story of Pentecost from last week. It undermines, the idea that our identity is found in cultural, linguistic and even 'closed' religious identity. Rather, we find our identity, our centre of gravity, in the Lordship of Jesus: nothing else.

**3** There was a Jewish leader named Nicodemus, who belonged to the party of the Pharisees. **2** One night he went to Jesus and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher sent by God. No one could perform the miracles you are doing unless God were with him."

**3** Jesus answered, "I am telling you the truth: no one can see the Kingdom of God without being born again."<sup>[1]</sup>

**4** "How can a grown man be born again?" Nicodemus asked. "He certainly cannot enter his mother's womb and be born a second time!"

**5** "I am telling you the truth," replied Jesus, "that no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit. **6** A person is born physically of human parents, but is born spiritually of the Spirit. **7** Do not be surprised because I tell you that you must all be born again.<sup>[b]</sup> **8** The wind blows wherever it wishes; you hear the sound it makes, but you do not know where it comes from or where it is going. It is like that with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

**9** "How can this be?" asked Nicodemus.

**10** Jesus answered, "You are a great teacher in Israel, and you don't know this? **11** I am telling you the truth: we speak of what we know and report what we have seen, yet none of you is willing to accept our message. **12** You do not believe me when I tell you about the things of this world; how will you ever believe me, then, when I tell you about the things of heaven? **13** And no one has ever gone up to heaven except the Son of Man, who came down from heaven."<sup>[c]</sup>



<sup>14</sup> As Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole in the desert, in the same way the Son of Man must be lifted up, <sup>15</sup> so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. <sup>16</sup> For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send his Son into the world to be its judge, but to be its saviour.

The Gospel of the Lord

***Praise to you Lord Christ***

**Hymn: Here in this place (TiS 474, Gather Us In, Marty Haugen)**

**Film Clip: “Manchester by the Sea”**

Set in Manchester, a town north of Boston, Massachusetts, this is story that is so un-American, while quintessentially Australian in mood, due to our scepticism about heroes and hero-worship. Lee is an anti-hero of sorts, bruised and traumatized by his own reversals and guilt. That said, he carries his own pain with resolution, and holds his broader family together amid tragedy. We see the last scenes of the movie, where he hands custody of his 16-year-old nephew Patrick, given him by his brother, who recently died, over to his friend George and his wife. In doing so he maintains the door open to Patrick in his fight to maintain the family together. This is a story of overwhelming courage in working class America.

**Homily...living ‘trinitarianly’! and a Discussion**

**Let’s Give: Our Offerings**

**Doxology**

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,  
praise him, all creatures here below,  
praise him above, ye heavenly host,  
praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.***

**Prayer of Dedication**

**Sacrament for Trinity**

## For Meditation: Confitemini Domino

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SsWgvtQ5dgs&t=1s>

|                           |                                |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>Confitemini Domino</i> | <i>Give thanks to the Lord</i> |
| <i>Quoniam Bonus</i>      | <i>for he is good</i>          |
| <i>Alleluia</i>           | <i>Alleluia</i>                |

## Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you

***And also with you***

Let us lift up our hearts.

***We lift them to the Lord.***

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

***It is right to give our thanks and praise.***

Thanks and praise, glory and honour are rightly yours

Our Lord and God,

For you alone are worthy.

In time beyond our dreaming,

You brought forth light out of darkness,

And in the love of Christ your Son,

You set women and men at the heart of your creation.

You call us to proclaim the mystery of our faith:

The Lord our God, the Lord is One,

Father, Son and Holy Spirit,

Trinity of love,

equal in majesty, undivided in splendour,

worshipped and adored for ever

And so we praise you,

With the faithful of every time and place,

joining with all the company of heaven and the whole creation

in their song

***Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
Heaven and earth  
are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.***

***Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest***

We thank you that you called a covenant people  
To be a light to the nations.  
Through Moses, you taught us to love your law,  
And in the prophets you cried out for justice

In the fullness of your mercy,  
You became one with us in Jesus Christ,  
who gave himself up for us on the cross.  
You make us alive, together with him,  
that we may rejoice in his presence and share his peace.

By water and the Spirit  
you open the kingdom to all who believe,  
and welcome us to your table:  
for by grace we are saved through faith.

Through him,  
in him  
and because of him,  
We affirm the Church's faith

***Christ has died.  
Christ has risen.  
Christ will come again.***

**Institution**

## Lord's Prayer (the Our Father)

Let us say the Lord's Prayer

***Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.***

***Forgive us our sins,  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.***

***For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. Amen.***

하늘에 계신 우리 아버지여  
이름이 거룩히 여김을 받으시오며  
나라이 임하옵시며  
뜻이 하늘에서 이룬 것 같이  
땅에서도 이루어지이다.  
오늘날 우리에게 일용할 양식을 주옵시고  
우리가 우리에게  
죄 지은 자를 사하여 준 것 같이  
우리 죄를 사하여 주옵시고  
우리를 시험에 들게 하지 마옵시고  
다만 악에서 구하옵소서  
대개 나라와 권세와 영광이  
아버지께 영원히 있사옵나이다. 아멘

## **Breaking of the Bread**

Christ is the bread of joy  
Who shares food with sinners.

Christ is the cup of life,  
Who revives the faint-hearted

Let us receive what we are;  
Let us become what we receive.

## **Lamb of God**

Jesus, Wisdom of God,  
***have mercy on us***

Jesus, Word made flesh,  
***have mercy on us***

Jesus, Liberator of creation  
***grant us peace.***

## **Communion**

### **Distribution**

### **Prayer after Communion**

God of heaven and earth,  
you make us one in Christ.  
Inspire us with new vision  
and the wisdom of ancient dreams.  
Give us strength to walk together  
In Christ's name  
*Amen*

## **Prayers of the People**

After several petitions, the one who prays states, “*Lord*” and we respond “*brighten the way of the world*”.

## **Closing Hymn: Holy, holy, holy (TiS 132, Nicea, John Bacchus Dykes)**

### **Blessing and Sending Out**

The Trinity, God, Son and Holy Spirit  
teaches us how to live  
provides a way forward in our relationships

We see reality through the Trinity

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord

### ***In the name of Christ***

**Sung Blessing: You shall go out with joy (TiS 755, Trees of the Field, Steffi Greiser Ruben)**

***You shall go out with joy  
and be led forth in peace  
and the mountains and hills shall break forth in singing  
There'll be shouts of joy  
and the trees of the field, shall clap, shall clap their hands  
and the trees of the field shall clap their hands  
and the trees of the field shall clap their hands  
and the trees of the field shall clap their hands  
and you'll go out with joy.***

***(twice)***

**Musical Postlude**

**Pianist:**

**Rosemary Osborne**