

Reflection on the Most Holy Trinity

It looks as if something of winter and summer sports will be played, even if these are behind closed doors. I do not think there is going to be much in the way of tennis, but there may be a cricket match or two. This is fine for me as I have loved cricket from a young age and used to enjoy playing and watching, but I know it will not suit everyone. As a child I remember the tea towel that was made, which jokingly described the rules of cricket in an ambiguous and confusing manner. It was meant for a visitor from a non-cricket playing country. One section of it reads *'When they are all out the side that's out comes in and the side that's been in goes out and tries to get those coming in out.'* At the time I could not see the funny side as I was too caught up with the game which made perfect sense to me! Those who try to describe the Most Holy Trinity run a risk, not of making jokes, but of confusing people with ambiguous language and switching people off from a beautiful mystery. A mystery of love and unity. St. Hilary of Poitiers (c.310 – c.367) said about descriptions of the Trinity: *"Let no one suppose such analogies are perfect and complete ... We must therefore regard any comparison as helpful to man rather than descriptive of God, since it suggests, rather than exhausts, the sense we seek"* So, taking those words to heart, we can stick with the definition of Pope St. Paul VI in the Credo of the People of God, *"We do not confess three Gods, but one God in three persons, the 'consubstantial Trinity'.*

The three divine persons are in a relationship of love and we are invited into this love and to let this be the way we live our lives. We are born into relationships with one another, our parents and wider family and community. We are then baptised in the name of the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Spirit*. As we grow, we need to discover how these relationships could be lived. The revelation of love within the Most Holy Trinity and the Christian Community's modelling of it is the rich template to answer that age-old question 'what must I do?' Over the past few weeks, we have seen the best of people in their goodness and love. In a meditation that I came across several years ago this outpouring of goodness was described. Imagining who could be in a large group of people of goodwill, it said: *"Some represent community action groups confronting local injustice; others are multinational, seeking solutions to world hunger and poverty; others are research scientists dedicated to finding new drugs to alleviate suffering; some represent authors and journalists who want to write about solutions to local and world problems; some are concerned with literacy and education; some are helping with employment and unemployment; some are philosophers and theologians; some are teachers; some are politicians truly committed to serving the people; some are concerned parents; some have dedicated their lives to devoutly meditating and praying for world peace and cooperation, for an end to war and terrorism. Every possible field or life path you can imagine is represented in this group..."* All of this we can observe around us, but at times these many groups work for different goals and may seem in competition with one another. As an illustration economic development may clash with the need for environmental protection and so on. The mystery of the Trinity invites us to bring this goodwill together.

We believe that the origin and source of this outpouring of goodness and love is God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. So, unity and fulfilment, not conflict, are possible under the goal of love. The first letter of St. Peter (1 Peter 4:8) says: *"Above all preserve an intense love for one another, since love covers over many a sin."* Our mission as Church exists to bring unity to humanity and to unite humanity to God. That is to bring Christ's victory to bear over sin and division. At the Second Vatican Council the Church describes herself in this way: *"Since the Church, in Christ, is a sacrament – a sign and instrument, that is of communion with God and of the unity of the entire human race... The present situation lends greater urgency to this duty of the Church, so that all people, who nowadays are drawn ever more closely together by*

social, technical and cultural bonds, may achieve full unity in Christ.” Love and Unity under Jesus Christ, albeit in difference, is something that would show a peaceful path to sorting out even some of the most painful issues which have boiled over these past few days. It is about working together gracefully towards the goal of unity and love displayed on the Cross and seen in his Resurrection and Ascension into heaven. Jesus said: “And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” (John 12:32).

God bless you, Canon David