

SOLEMN FEAST OF THE MOST HOLY TRINITY

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

These words are very familiar to us and, no doubt, can be recognised immediately for they form the Greeting at the beginning of the celebration of mass. As with much of our liturgical prayer and worship, these words are also biblical. St. Paul concludes his Second Letter to the Corinthians with this greeting. At mass, they follow the sign of the cross we have traced upon ourselves and which in itself recalls our baptism in the name of the Holy Trinity.

The Feast of the Holy Trinity which falls on the Sunday after Pentecost and the close of the Easter Season also teaches us that the life, death, Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus to heaven leads us to God himself, whom we worship in spirit and truth as Holy, Holy, Holy: Holy Father, Holy Son, Holy Spirit.

Such is the wondrous mystery of God and the intimacy with him into which we are invited, that God comes close to us and reveals his true nature and personality. It is natural to believe in God, but we cannot work God out for ourselves for he is above and beyond the human mind. No human words can contain the greatness of God, yet that said, God has spoken his Word, Jesus Christ to us and enlightened our minds so that, brought to the complete truth by the Holy Spirit, we may indeed speak of Him.

God has revealed himself to us, beginning with the Creation, as the origin and maker of all things. What God has made is good, and His goodness is beyond measure. From thence, the People of the Old Testament directly experienced God's intervention in their lives and in the world. The fundamental passages of the Old Testament speak of how this people came to know One God alone, the Lord, a God of tenderness and compassion, rich in kindness and faithfulness. The Books of the Old Testament can be understood as the chapters of a love story narrating the love of God for a people He made His own. In his prayer, the Benedictus, Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, expresses this perfectly,

*Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel,
He has visited his people and redeemed them*

It is in Jesus Christ alone that the fulness of divine revelation takes place. There is only One, true and eternal God, but such is the mystery of God's life and love that the divine nature is possessed by three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, who are co-eternal and co-equal. So, we say the Father is God, the Son is God and the Holy Spirit is God, but the Father is not the Son, nor the Holy Spirit the Father, for each person is distinct but the divine nature is One. God is love, but that love is mutually and eternally shared by the three persons, almost as if an eternal family. The divine purpose at work in the Creation and salvation of mankind, is to raise us up and make us sharers of the divine life.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be world without end. Amen.

For many people today, God is of no particular interest or a 'delusion', but for those who allow themselves to be drawn to God the very opposite is true. In God we discover ourselves and the true meaning of life and death. God made us in His own image and likeness and in the redeeming love of Jesus Christ we are reconfigured, as it were, through him and his Sonship, to become sons and daughters of God called to share the life of the Holy Trinity.

Jesus said, *to see me is to see the Father*, and when he addressed God as 'Father' he did so with the word *Abba*, a word in the Aramaic language he daily spoke which equates with the English word 'Daddy'. The opening words of the Lord's Prayer, begin by addressing God in this intimate way. At Pentecost, the hidden person in God, the Holy Spirit, came to us and enabled us to call God, Father. Our belief in God has been taught by God himself. Faith is certain, it is to stand on firm ground, the surest knowledge, but from this we pass into the very mystery of God whose love is beyond all understanding.

We sing in a great hymn to the Trinity,

*Holy Father, Holy Son, Holy Spirit, three we name thee,
while in essence only One undivided God we claim thee;
and adoring bend the knee while we own the mystery*

Fr Anthony