

Worship resources
Trinity Sunday



The doctrine of the Trinity can, at times, feel like an awkward and embarrassing Christian belief. It is also, almost certainly, a deeply misunderstood one.

For this reason, Trinity Sunday may well be one of the days in the year where we are tempted to depart from the Lectionary and focus our meditations elsewhere. If we can resist all these temptations, and embrace the mystery and majesty of this day, the worship we enjoy, springing from our reflections on our Trinitarian God, can be deep, transforming and deeply inspiring.

May we find new creativity and connectedness as we gather to worship the God who is revealed to us as Divine Parent, Incarnate Child and Ubiquitous Spirit.

INTRODUCTIONS

For use by lectors, in order of service, parish bulletins and magazines

The First Reading - Genesis 1: 1 - 2: 4a

We begin today's readings with the opening of the first book of the Bible and its poetic account of the origin of all things in the will of the God, who is Creator of all that is, seen and unseen.

The Psalm - Psalm 8

The Psalmist ponders how the great God who created all things nevertheless cares for human beings and gives men and women a place of stewardship over creation.

The Second Reading - 2 Corinthians 13: 11-13

Paul ends this letter with the full form of his customary blessing. These simple trinitarian words, of grace, love, and communion have been familiar in every church in every century.

The Gospel Reading - Matthew 28: 16-20

Matthew ends his Gospel with the promise that Christ is always with us. The disciples are commissioned to carry Christ's own healing love, to make new disciples, and baptise them as the church has done ever since, in the name of the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

[Click here to view the readings](#)

http://bible.oremus.org/?show_adj=no&passages=Genesis%201:%201%20-%202:%204a%0A%2BOR%0AIsaiah%2040:%2012%20-%2017,%2027-%2031%0A%20Psalm%208%0A%20Corinthians%2013:%2011-13%0AMatthew%2028:%2016-20

COLLECTS OF THE DAY

Collect One

Almighty and everlasting God,
who hast given unto us thy servants grace
by the confession of a true faith
to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity,
and in the power of the Divine Majesty to worship the Unity;
We beseech thee,
that thou wouldest keep us steadfast in this faith,
and evermore defend us from all adversities,
who livest and reignest, one God, world without end.

Collect Two

Almighty and everlasting God,
you have given us your servants grace,
by the confession of a true faith,
to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity

and in the power of the divine majesty to worship the Unity:
Keep us steadfast in this faith,
that we may evermore be defended from all adversities;
for you live and reign, one God, for ever and ever.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 1

God is our creator and Father, made himself visible to us in his Son. Through his Spirit he loves us and wants to make Jesus known and loved. Let us pray:

Lord our God, hear our prayer.

Father, creator of heaven and earth, help us to respect your creation, to develop this world and to make this earth fruitful for the benefit of all people, we pray :

Lord our God, hear our prayer.

Father, you have made your love of people visible in your beloved Son Jesus Christ, one of us, human like us, and our Savior. Help us to grow more like him and to continue on earth his task of bringing salvation and freedom to all, we pray:

Lord our God, hear our prayer.

Father, you pour out your life and love through your Holy Spirit in the hearts of people. Help us through him to heal what is wounded, to soften what is hard and to warm what is cold, we pray:

Lord our God, hear our prayer.

Father, Son and Holy Spirit, let this community and your whole Church become a living sign to this world of your own community of love, we pray:

Lord our God, hear our prayer.

Lord our God, be the foundation and the meaning of our Christian lives and lead your pilgrim people to the fullness of your life and love in the unity of the Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 2

At your word, O Christ, we have been sent to make disciples of all nations -

baptizing and teaching. We ask for vision and humility for our task saying, "God of all people," and responding, "Hear our prayer."

A: For Bishop _____ (*eg, on his upcoming anniversary of ordination*), that he/she might model grace, acceptance and the depth of God's mercy in his daily work, especially for the unrighteous and those most undeserving of God's love. God of all people,
Hear our prayer.

For all teachers in the church, for our theological institute and schools and for all who help Christ's living word become a spring of fresh water for others, that they might joyfully continue in their apostolic task. God of all people,
Hear our prayer.

For those who serve others, especially those who reach out to strangers with words of welcome and grace, that they might be strengthened in their witness. God of all people,
Hear our prayer.

For those who have been baptised and those who are preparing for Holy Baptism that they might joyfully walk in the way of Christ. God of all people,
Hear our prayer.

God of All People, you have set a table in our midst. Help us to remember those in our world who regularly are excluded from abundance: the poor, the homeless, the very old and the very young. Help us to become their servants so that their lives might be filled to overflowing. God of all people,
Hear our prayer.

Our greatest witness to your love, O Christ, is a commitment to justice. Grant that our lives might reflect your will. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 3

God is our creator and Father, made himself visible to us in his Son. Through his Spirit he loves us and wants to make Jesus known and loved. Let us pray:

Lord our God, hear our prayer.

Father, creator of heaven and earth, help us to respect your creation, to develop this world and to make this earth fruitful for the benefit of all people, we pray :

Lord our God, hear our prayer.

Father, you have made your love of people visible in your beloved Son Jesus Christ, one of us, human like us, and our Savior. Help us to grow more like him and to continue on earth his task of bringing salvation and freedom to all, we pray:

Lord our God, hear our prayer.

Father, you pour out your life and love through your Holy Spirit in the hearts of people. Help us through him to heal what is wounded, to soften what is hard and to warm what is cold, we pray:

Lord our God, hear our prayer.

Father, Son and Holy Spirit, let this community and your whole Church become a living sign to this world of your own community of love, we pray:

Lord our God, hear our prayer.

Lord our God, be the foundation and the meaning of our Christian lives and lead your pilgrim people to the fullness of your life and love in the unity of the Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

POST COMMUNION

Almighty God,
may we who have received this holy communion,
worship you with lips and lives
proclaiming your majesty
and finally see you in your eternal glory:
Holy and Eternal Trinity,
one God, now and for ever.

PRAYERS

Let us Pray
[to the one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
that our lives may bear witness to our faith]
Father,

you sent your Word
to bring us truth
and your Spirit to make us holy.
Through them we come to know
the mystery of your life.
Help us to worship you,
one God in three Persons,
by proclaiming and living our faith in you.
We ask you this, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
one God, true and living, for ever and ever.

Let us Pray

[to our God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit]

God, we praise you:

Father all-powerful,
Christ Lord and Savior,
Spirit of Love.

You reveal yourself in the depths of our being,
drawing us to share in your life and your love.

One God, three Persons,
be near to the people formed in your image,
close to the world your love brings to life.

We ask you this, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
one God, true and living, forever and ever.

Almighty and everlasting God,
you have given to us you servants grace,
by the confession of a true faith,
to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity,
and in the power of your divine Majesty
to worship the Unity:

Keep us steadfast in this faith and worship,
and bring us at last

to see you in your one and eternal glory, O Father;
who with the Son and the Holy Spirit live and reign,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Book of Divine Worship (and the Book of Common Prayer)

Father,

You sent your Word to bring us truth
and your Spirit to make us holy.

Through them we come to know the mystery of your life.

Help us to worship you, one God in three persons,

You reveal yourself in the depths of our being,
by proclaiming and living our faith in you.
Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God for ever and ever. Amen

The Liturgy of the Hours

Almighty and eternal God, you have revealed yourself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and live and reign in the perfect unity of love. Hold us firm in this faith, that we may know you in all your ways and evermore rejoice in your eternal glory, who are three Persons in one God, now and forever. Amen.

(Church of S. India)

Almighty and everlasting God, you have given us your servants grace, by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity and in the power of the divine majesty to worship the Unity: keep us steadfast in this faith, that we may evermore be defended from all adversities; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen. *(Common Worship)*

Praying the Trinity

1. God as Creator

As Christians we cannot believe that the world was the work of anybody other than our God. We look at it and it is marvellous and we believe that God made it. But it is more than a belief in some thing which we read. When we look at creation we feel God and his creating power. Today we give thanks to God

Thank you God that you have made all things and made them well
That you have given to us all things richly to enjoy
For the beauty and the bounty of this fair earth and for the creating power
alive in this universe which make all things new.
For this we thank you God
But forgive us when in pride, or selfishness or anger we misuse your gifts

2. God as Jesus who died for us

We read about Jesus but when we read the story it isn't just a story, it comes across to us as powerfully as if it happened yesterday. We read that Jesus lived and walked this earth, we remember the history of his birth, but there is more than that, we feel the life of Christ today, we seek daily to bear his cross and to live his risen life -

Thank you Jesus for your redeeming power.

That you loved us and gave yourself for us:

That you gave your life a ransom for many, a ransom for us.

That you were obedient to death, even the death of the cross.

We thank you O Christ

Forgive us if we treat your love lightly as a little thing, and if we ever fail to try to love you as you love us

3. God as the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit calls us to be God's people, joins us together as one body in the name of Jesus. It is by the power of the Holy Spirit working in our lives that we know God. It is the Holy Spirit who draws us on in the Christian life.

Thank you Holy Spirit for the guidance you have given to us.

For the knowledge you have brought to us.

For your continual upholding, strengthening, protecting power

We thank you Holy Spirit of God

Forgive us when we try to live the Christian life alone and have failed to seek the divine help which we might have had from you.

Father, you sent your Word to bring us truth and your Spirit to make us holy.

Through them we come to know the mystery of your life. Help us to worship you, one God in three Persons, by proclaiming and living our faith in you.

Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, Who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, One God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Litany of the Most Holy Trinity

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Blessed Trinity,

hear us.

Adorable Unity,

graciously hear us.

God the Father of Heaven,

Have mercy on us.

God the Son, Redeemer of the world,

Have mercy on us.

God the Holy Spirit,
Have mercy on us.
Holy Trinity, One God,
Have mercy on us.
Father from Whom are all things,
Have mercy on us.
Son through Whom are all things,
Have mercy on us.
Holy Spirit in Whom are all things,
Have mercy on us.
Holy and undivided Trinity,
Have mercy on us.
Father everlasting,
Have mercy on us.
Only-begotten Son of the Father,
Have mercy on us.
Spirit Who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
Have mercy on us.
Co-eternal Majesty of Three Divine Persons,
Have mercy on us.
Father, the Creator,
Have mercy on us.
Son, the Redeemer,
Have mercy on us.
Holy Spirit, the Comforter,
Have mercy on us.
Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts,

Have mercy on us.
Who is, Who was, and Who is to come,
Have mercy on us.
God Most High, Who inhabits eternity,
Have mercy on us.
To Whom alone are due all honor and glory,
Have mercy on us.
Who alone does great wonders,
Have mercy on us.
Power infinite,
Have mercy on us.
Wisdom incomprehensible,
Have mercy on us.

Love unspeakable,
Have mercy on us.

Be merciful,
Spare us, O Holy Trinity.
Be merciful,
Graciously hear us, O Holy Trinity.

From all evil,
Deliver us, O Holy Trinity.
From all sin,
Deliver us, O Holy Trinity.
From all pride,
Deliver us, O Holy Trinity.
From all love of riches,
Deliver us, O Holy Trinity.
From all uncleanness,
Deliver us, O Holy Trinity.
From all sloth,
Deliver us, O Holy Trinity.
From all inordinate affection,
Deliver us, O Holy Trinity.
From all envy and malice,
Deliver us, O Holy Trinity.
From all anger and impatience,
Deliver us, O Holy Trinity.
From every thought, word, and deed contrary to Your holy law,
Deliver us, O Holy Trinity.
From Your everlasting malediction,
Deliver us, O Holy Trinity.
Through Your plenteous loving kindness,
Deliver us, O Holy Trinity.
Through the exceeding treasure of Your goodness and love,
Deliver us, O Holy Trinity.
Through the depths of Your wisdom and knowledge,
Deliver us, O Holy Trinity.
Through all Your unspeakable perfections,
Deliver us, O Holy Trinity.

We sinners,
Beseech You, hear us.
That we may ever serve You alone,
We beseech You, hear us.

That we may worship You in spirit and in truth,

We beseech You, hear us.

That we may love You with all our heart, with all our soul, & with all our strength,

We beseech You, hear us.

That, for Your sake, we may love our neighbor as ourselves,

We beseech You, hear us.

That we may faithfully keep Your holy commandments,

We beseech You, hear us.

That we may never defile our bodies and souls with sin,

We beseech You, hear us.

That we may go from grace to grace, and virtue to virtue,

We beseech You, hear us.

That we may finally enjoy the sight of You in glory,

We beseech You, hear us.

That You would vouchsafe to hear us,

We beseech You, hear us.

O Blessed Trinity,

We beseech You, deliver us.

O Blessed Trinity,

We beseech You, save us.

O Blessed Trinity,

Have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy,

Christ, have mercy,

Lord Have Mercy

Blessed are You O Lord, in the firmament of heaven

And worthy to be praised, and glorious, and highly exalted forever!

Invocation to the Trinity: Trisagion

Holy God,

Holy Mighty,

Holy Immortal,

Have Mercy on Us

A traditional litany for Trinity Sunday

Worthy of praise from every mouth,

worthy of confession from every tongue, worthy of worship from every creature,

is your glorious name, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

For you created the world in your grace,
and by your compassion you saved the world.

To your majesty, O God,
ten thousand times ten thousand bow down and adore,
singing and praising without ceasing, and saying:

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts;
heaven and earth are full of your praises.

Hosanna in the highest. Nestorian Liturgy, 5th Century – UIW

To God, our ability is less important than our availability. Our ability can even get in the way if it obscures God's role in our achievement. Let us remember God the Father in Creation

Let us remember God the Father in Creation

O God, the Father, we thank you for your creating power. That you have made all things and made them well; That you have given us all things richly to enjoy; For the beauty and the bounty of this fair earth; And for the creating power which can make all things new: We thank you. O Father.

Forgive us if in pride and selfishness and in anger we have misused your gifts, and have used for death that which was meant for life.

Let us remember God the Son in Redemption

O Lord Jesus Christ the Son, we thank you for your redeeming power. That you loved us and gave yourself for us; That you gave your life a ransom for many, a ransom for us. That you were obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross: We thank you, O Christ.

Forgive us if we have treated your love lightly as a little thing, and if we have never even begun to love you as you have first loved us.

Let us remember God the Spirit in Providence

O Holy Spirit of God, we thank you for your keeping power. For the guidance you have given us, For the knowledge you have brought us; For your continual upholding, strengthening, protecting power: We thank you, O Spirit of God.

Forgive us if we have tried to live life alone, and have despoiled ourselves of the divine help we might have had from you.

And may the blessing of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the Three in One, be on us now and stay with each one of us always. **Amen.**

Prayers by William Barclay

BLESSINGS

Peace to you from God our heavenly Father.
Peace from his Son Jesus Christ who is our peace.
Peace from the Holy Spirit the giver of life.

God the Holy Trinity make you strong in faith and love,
defend you on every side, and guide you in truth and peace;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be among you, and remain with you always.
Amen.

To God the Father, who loved us, and accepted us:
To God the Son, who loved us and loosed us from our sins by his own blood:
To God the Holy Ghost, who spreads the love of God abroad in our hearts:
To the one true God be all love and all glory for time and for eternity. Amen.

LECTIONARY NOTES 1

Genesis 1:1-2:4a, Psalm 8, 2 Corinthians 13:11-13, Matthew 28:16-20

Genesis 1:1-2:4a:

This is the creation story - an interesting selection for Trinity Sunday!
This is the *first* creation story - not the one with Adam and Eve and the serpent from later in Chapter 2. I love the creation story. I also believe in evolution. I don't find them to be contradictory. I asked my sixth grade Sunday School teacher how the world could be made in 7 days if dinosaurs were extinct so long before people were around. He said, "God's time isn't the same as our time, and a day in Genesis 1 isn't necessarily supposed to be a day like our days." I found that pretty satisfying. Why do we have to make it one or the other? Is our faith not strong enough to believe in evolution?

Notice the *goodness* of creation in God's view. Everything God creates is good. EVERYTHING. One of my colleagues who is a probationary elder in the [UMC](#) as I am, got critiqued in her BOOM interview because she argued that humans are essentially good - her theology wasn't

"original sin" enough for some. But who can argue with God? God created us - and declared us good.

Psalm 8:

What a great psalm! Chalk full of good lines. 'How majestic is thy name in all the earth!' The words to one of my favourite praise songs. But beyond this opening line:

"What are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them? Yet you have made them a little lower than God . . ." I think this verse is one of life's deepest questions. This is maybe more detailed than 'why are we here?', but it is close. It presumes God, but asks, 'why has God made us?' 'Why does God care about us?' 'What's the point?' I hate not having the answers sometimes, but I think it is part of what makes God God and me not God!

"Dominion." This is a loaded word when it comes to our care of the earth and all that is in it. What does dominion mean? Domination? Responsible stewardship? License to do as we will? Care for our human needs above all else? As a vegetarian, and an earth lover, my senses are aware of a word like dominion - just us use with authority from God with great care!

2 Corinthians 13:11-13:

A short and sweet selection - "live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you." Ah, what a prayer. Paul encourages us to "agree with one another" and to practice peace. We need those words, don't we? Are we living in peace? Do you have peace in your home? Your heart? Your community?

Matthew 28:16-20:

The Great Commission - a selection for Trinity Sunday because of the words commanding that we baptize, as we now do, "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

"make disciples of all nations." This is a key verse for evangelism or proselytizing, and, as usual, is used by Christians differently depending on understandings of scripture and interpretation. The word for *disciples*

is *mathe^{teusate}*, which literally means pupils, or students. What does it mean to be a student of Jesus? How do you make others into students of Jesus?

The disciples are to teach others to "obey everything that [Jesus has] commanded" them. Not just to believe in Jesus - but to be Jesus-like and follow Jesus-like teachings.

"I am with you always." I think those are some of the most comforting words in the whole Bible. *By Beth Quick*

LECTIONARY NOTES 2

REFLECTIONS ON THEME:

This year the focus of Trinity Sunday is on two complementary themes. In the first, we are called to recognise and open ourselves to the work of the Triune God in creation – in the act of creating, in revealing God's self to humanity, and in empowering humanity to participate with God in the care of the universe. Both the Genesis reading and the Psalm reflect this theme. In the second theme we are called to recognise the uniting, community-creating work of the God who is, within God's self, a Triune community. Paul's letter to the Corinthians speaks of the unity of the church and of the Trinity's gifts to bring us together and in Matthew's Gospel, Jesus calls his followers to bring others into the community of faith, giving them a place of belonging through the act of baptism in the name of the Triune God. Both themes – God's work in creation, and God's work in community – lead us to a recognition of the connectedness of all things, and of God's presence and life in all things. God is always creating and always connecting (or revealing the connections that are always there), and so we are called to participate in God's work by participating in God's community and bringing others – including all of creation – into the gracious, growing, interconnected, life-sharing, just and creative communion of the Trinity.

CONNECTING WITH LIFE:

GLOBAL APPLICATION: The questions of how we define our connectedness and how we define community have become increasingly significant in the world today. We are beginning to recognise the extent to which we have divided ourselves as human beings – from God, from one another and from the earth and its creatures. We are also beginning to recognise the extent to which these divisions are illusory. We have come to understand that small changes, when they are multiplied through the interconnectedness of systems and creatures, have large impact. We have

felt the effects of crises and conflicts that have happened far away from us, yet have changed our own circumstances and ways of being. We have discovered that things we do – what we buy and eat and drive and wear – can have surprising results, for better or worse, on other people in other places. This is both challenging and exciting. It is challenging because we can no longer claim ignorance as an excuse, and we find ourselves being disturbed by things that, in times past, would have caused little concern. It is exciting because we are learning and experiencing – perhaps as never before – the richness of our diversity, and the gifts of our connectedness. We are also being opened to discovering God in new ways, and in more intimate ways through the recognition of God’s connectedness with us and our world. And so we are faced with the call of God to become mindful, in every moment, every action and every interaction of God’s creative and community-building presence, and to participate, in whatever small or large ways we can, with God’s work of connecting. The questions we must face as we seek to answer God’s call are these: In what ways have we fallen into patterns of defining ourselves by our divisions and disconnectedness? In what specific ways can we seek to contribute to God’s connecting work and take our place in God’s global community while always seeking to make welcoming space for others – especially those we struggle to connect with?

LOCAL APPLICATION: One of the challenges of “doing church” in our networked age is to discern what the place of the church is, and to imagine what it can be. For some, this connectedness is threatening, and the Church strives to become a place of escape, a place of difference and a place in which connections can be carefully monitored and controlled. For others, connectedness is a threat to identity, leaving a small, closed community feeling the need to defend itself against becoming lost in the wider communities that beckon. If, however, we can learn to embrace what can be learned and rediscovered through these new global connections, and if we can begin to dream about our place in this interconnected universe, we can find wonderful inspiration and motivation for ministry, for community and for worship. What might it mean if we begin to identify ourselves by our connectedness, rather than our difference or disconnection? What it might it mean to view the local church as just one manifestation of a radically interconnected universe? What might ministry become if we were motivated and guided by the ways we are connected to those we are trying to reach, rather than focusing on how ‘they’ are different from ‘us’? When we begin to recognise that we share in the community within the Trinity, we find a home, and are also led into a radical openness and “welcomingness” to others. When we begin to experience the grace of Christ, love of God and presence of the Spirit working in us and through us, we start asking new questions,

praying new prayers, singing new songs and initiating new actions. How might you be able to make this Sunday a celebration of this creative connectedness, and a time of dreaming up new ways that your community can share in it right where you are?

SERMON OUTLINE 1

Matt 28:16-20 Then the 11 disciples went...

It had been a traumatic weekend for the disciples - had plumbed the depths of despair as their Lord & Master had been arrested & condemned, crucified & buried... Then (28.1) *Mary Magdalene & the other Mary* (wife of Clopas, mother of James & Joses Mk 16.11) *went to look at the tomb* - & saw an angel (2) & then Jesus himself (9) who told them: *Don't be afraid. Go tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.*

So the disciples duly obeyed.....

1. How they Went: - in obedience *to Galilee to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go.* They went where Jesus sent them - the story of the Mission of the Church down the centuries

2. How the Worshipped: *when (17) they saw him him they worshipped him* - no other reaction to the Holy One - Son of God!... but sadly, not for all - even the disciples - *but some doubted* - reference possibly to Thomas?

Many today still doubt - agnostics - aren't sure..

disbelieve - atheists - cannot be true...

don't bother - apathy - couldn't care less...

3. How they Witnessed: *Go & make disciples of all nations* - how? a) *baptising them in the name of the Father, Son & Holy Spirit* b) *teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you*

If they did they were assured of the presence of the Risen Lord - *Surely (20) I will be with you always, to the very end of the age* - a wonderful promise/ presence - available to all of us thro a living/saving faith in the Risen, Ascended & Glorified Lord. *By Norman Porteous*

SERMON OUTLINE 2

None of our readings today use the word 'Trinity,' yet God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit is central to them. Indeed the word 'Trinity' is not used by Jesus, it is not found in the Bible at all, yet faith in the Holy Trinity is the touchstone of what it means to be a Christian. Those who do not believe in God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit cannot use the term Christian to describe themselves— Jehovah's Witnesses, Christadelphians etc.

Trinity Sunday is a special Sunday because we think about who God is—the Trinity of Father, Son, and Spirit. Even the most committed Christians find this hard because we all know that something cannot be individually three and also completely one. But this Sunday expresses and celebrates the fact that we encounter God in contradictory ways.

In our world there are some certain simple truths, like - 'water is generally wet.' But when we start to speak about things which really matter - like God, then we soon find out that we run out of words. Human language and thoughts simply fail to work. Truth is no more easily reduced to trite slogans than the scientific explanation of the creation of this wonderful world can be reduced to two chapters of Genesis. Through history we can see times when people have imagined that they did possess understanding and knowledge of God. But, actually this is an illusion, faith is not built upon the measure of the human mind.

As Christians we need to be honest about our inability to explain God. It would be wonderful to be able to speak of God in certain and simple truths, but if we are honest, certainty is the property of fools, not the learned. Those who are more intellectually secure will usually admit that the more that we find out - the less we seem to know. Issues are only seen in simple terms of black and white by the simplistic and those who seek to lead them.

Does this make our task of speaking about God more difficult? I think not, it is a fact that people cannot be argued into belief. They can be attracted, they can be welcomed and embraced but they cannot be argued. People most usually come to believe through faith not through facts. Preachers will often preach the certainty, the black and white. However, truth is much more often grey. The more we learn the more we realise that the less we know. This is not to say that we should stop the task of learning, but we must be more prepared to recognise that God is too big for us. It is human sin and pride aspire to lift us to God, humility sees that God into the human mind will not go. It is no more possible for us to understand God than to put the ocean into a bucket.

Whilst the word Trinity is not found in the Bible, the belief which it expresses is stated many times. The early Christians soon discovered that they simply could not speak of God without speaking of the three ways in which he had revealed himself to them. This does not mean that there are three Gods. It means that there is one God who has shown himself in three ways: God the Father, God the Son or Jesus, and Holy Spirit of God who came to them and made God alive in them.

Clearly this teaching is absurd from the point of human logic, it makes no human sense! All of the clever illustrations (Clover leaf, the sun as heat, light and energy etc.) which we have heard since Sunday School, they all fall short of explaining how logically God can be totally three and yet totally one. Indeed some of the best illustrations used in sermons serve only to illustrate serious heresies such as modalism! If we are honest it is something which is more clearly explained in terms of that great Christian word, mystery. It is a mystery of our faith. We know why we use the term 'Trinity' because it expresses our experience of a God who can be present in Jesus, whilst at the same time, the voice of God is heard to speak from heaven and the Spirit descend as a dove. But nevertheless it is a mystery.

It is important to remember that the Trinity does not actually attempt to explain God. It only explains what we know about God, that which he has revealed to us in a very elementary way. So we Christians affirm the Trinity, not as an explanation of God, but simply as a way of describing what we currently know about God. This is honest and it should not make us frightened. In 1 Corinthians Chapter 13 it says where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror;

Knowledge will pass away. Human knowledge will be revealed to be a lot less important than some might care to believe. As Christians we need to have the honesty to say that we see but a poor reflection of God as in a mirror, we see through a glass darkly. Our knowledge of God is imperfect, we know in part and the rest is guesswork. Moreover we will never know all the answers until we see God face to face. *Charles Royden*

Bishop Richard Chartres, writing on the Holy Trinity -

"You can't have a God. If you have, possess a God, if you talk about My God, my own little possession that helps me, my asset, then what you have is not the true and living God, father of our Lord Jesus Christ, but an Idol, a God made in our own image. And, brothers and sisters, much of the history of religion, even in the Christian Religion, is an attempt to make Gods of ourselves, by launching ego-projections into the middle distance - plop - and then having an affair with that ego-projection. That's what religion has been, so very often."

ONLINE SERMON SOURCES

A glowing oven full of love

The Rev. Dr. Joseph S. Pagano, Sermons that Work, Episcopal Digital Network

<http://episcopaldigitalnetwork.com/stw/2014/05/27/trinity-sunday-a-2014/>

The Great Omission

The Rev. Dr. Charles Reeb, Day 1

http://day1.org/5868-the_great_omission

"Blah, Blah, Blah, Blah...Love,"

The Rev. Dr. James B. Lemler, *Day 1*

So...here's a question for you, a deeply personal question. Can you think of a time when you really experienced love, when you really experienced being loved? Yes, it's a probing and personal question, but it's not one I dreamed up on my own. Rather, it was a question at the basis of a book that one of our best American theologians put together a few years ago. Diogenes Allen asked people far and wide about their experience of being loved and then wrote a marvelous book simply and accurately titled "Love."

http://day1.org/1094-blah_blah_blah_blah_love

Make disciples of all nations

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...." There are probably fewer words in the Scriptures that have had a more profound effect on our common history as the men and women of the Christian faith in that simple phrase: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations." The Rt. Rev. Steven Charleston was the president and dean of Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, MA, 1999-2008. He says as disciples of Christ we are heirs to that tradition.

http://day1.org/939-sermon_for_trinity_sunday

A Mystery Almost Too Good to Be -

Live in peace and the God of love and peace will be with you (2 Cor. 13:11). By John R Donahue. He says, "The Gospel of John does not present a theology of non-Christian religions, but it is written both for fence-sitters like Nicodemus (3:1-15) and for John's persecuted community".... and states that "The solemnity of the Holy Trinity offers the foundation of Christian hope."

http://www.americamagazine.org/content/article.cfm?article_id=1952

A family into which God has invited us

Andrew Greeley is one of the most insightful novelists and sociologists commenting upon Roman Catholic church life in the USA. As the name suggests he has deep Irish roots, and he draws on these telling the story of an orphan who leaves Kinsale for life in the USA, to introduce the Trinity as "a family into which God has invited us". A short and succinct background and story based on John 14: 15 - 21.

<http://www.agreeley.com/hom11/may29.htm>

CHILDREN

[Worshiping with Children](#), Trinity A, Including children in the congregation's worship, using the Revised Common Lectionary, Carolyn C. Brown, <http://worshipingwithchildren.blogspot.co.uk/2011/05/year-trinity-sunday-june-19-2011.html>

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["Sermon of the Week," / "Mensajes para ninos,"](#) Sermons 4 Kids, Charles Kirkpatrick, Object Lessons & Children's Sermons, Coloring Pages, Puzzles. Sermons4Kids.com.

<http://www.sermons4kids.com/>

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["King of the World"](#) Children's Lesson for Trinity Sunday A (June 19, 2011), from Anna's Hosannas

<http://annashosannas.net/Trinity-Sunday-A.php>

Delivering the invitation - Relates invitations to birthday parties to Jesus' invitation to make disciples of all nations.

<http://www.sermons4kids.com/delivering-invitation.html>

HYMN SUGGESTIONS

[Holy, Holy, Holy](#)

[Father, We Praise Thee](#)

[Holy God, We Praise Thy Name](#)

[Immortal Invisible](#)

[Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow](#)

[Father, Spirit, Jesus](#) (*Link to YouTube video*)

[Praise The Father, Praise The Son](#) (*Link to YouTube video*)

[Glorify Your Name](#) (*Link to YouTube video*)

1st Reading Genesis 1: 1– 2: 4a

23 Álainn farraige spéirghlas

(Beautiful the green blue sea)
24* All creatures of our God and King
25* All things bright and beautiful
318* Father, Lord of all creation
74 First of the week and finest day
48 God in his love for us lent us this planet
3 God is love: let heaven adore him
26 God sends us refreshing rain
4* God, who made the earth
67* God, who made the earth and heaven
27 God who stretched the spangled heavens
324* God whose almighty word
28* I sing the almighty power of God
94* In the name of Jesus
30* Let us with a gladsome mind
49 Lord, bring the day to pass
29* Lord of beauty, thine the splendour
31 Lord of the boundless curves and space
537* O God, our help in ages past
32* O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder
33* O Lord of every shining constellation
34* O worship the King all-glorious above
35* The spacious firmament on high
77* This day at God's creating word
36* We thank you, God our Father

Alternative Isaiah 40: 12–17, 27–31

1st Reading 566* Fight the good fight with all thy might
3 God is love: let heaven adore him
306* O Spirit of the living God
323* The God of Abraham praise

Psalm Psalm 8

316* Bright the vision that delighted
6* Immortal, invisible, God only wise
362* O God beyond all praising
32* O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder
33* O Lord of every shining constellation

2nd Reading 2 Corinthians 13: 11–13

298 Filled with the Spirit's power, with one accord
524* May the grace of Christ our Saviour 524
507 Put peace into each other's hands 507

The Gospel Matthew 28: 16–20

398* Alleluia! sing to Jesus
86 Christ is the King! O friends, rejoice
454* Forth in the peace of Christ we go
478* Go forth and tell! O Church of God, awake!
455 Go forth for God; go forth to the world in peace
479* Go, tell it on the mountain

480* God forgave my sin in Jesus' name
322* I bind unto myself today (vv. 1, 8, 9)
456* Lord, you give the great commission
104* O for a thousand tongues to sing
306* O Spirit of the living God
497 The Church of Christ in every age
199* The people that in darkness walked
492* Ye servants of God, your master proclaim

Please commend this resource to colleagues - they simply send an email to churchnewsireland@gmail.com with the message Passwords in the title