



Trinity Sunday: 30th May 2021

Reflection / Homily – Mgr Daniel McHugh

“Baptise them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”

As I am writing this Reflection for Trinity Sunday I’m surrounded by pictures, and a key one over my shoulder is a copy of a famous Icon of the Trinity by the Russian painter Andrei Rublev of the 15th Century. It is regarded as one of the highest achievements of Russian Art. The Trinity depicts the three angels who visited Abraham and Sarah to announce the birth of Isaac. The painting is full of symbolism and is interpreted as an Icon of the Holy Trinity – one God in three persons: the communion of the three in sublime conversation is central to the composition. The Icon based on the story in Genesis 18 is also called the Hospitality of Abraham and Sarah, who recognized the Divine Visitation, addressed them as one and prepared a meal for them. The depiction of the meal calls to mind the Eucharist of Jesus and the 2 disciples on the road to Emmaus after the Resurrection.

The Trinity here it seems to me is not something static, rather you are invited as Abraham and Sarah were to enter into contemplation, adoration and conversation.

Sometimes the Church’s teaching on the Trinity is criticized because it is misunderstood: we do not veer away from the central teaching of the great Faiths in one God, rather, as that one God is revealed to us by Jesus as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we enter into communion with Him.

Indeed, the Gospel for the Mass on Trinity Sunday has perhaps the most explicit of revelations of the three in one when Jesus takes his Disciples to the top of the mountain and gives them what is called Great Commission – as recorded in St Matthew: “Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations, baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

God reveals Himself in the Scriptures as the Father who created us, the Son who redeemed us and the Spirit who gives us the Grace of His in life in us, starting with Baptism. Each Divine Person is the full reality of God: we tend to address one or other according to the situation we are in, for example thanking the Father for Creation; asking the Son to heal and forgive; and going to the Holy Spirit to guide us into new ways. But, we are not to let that concern or worry us, each person is the full reality of God, as we are told in one of the great Councils of the Church called Lateran IV in 1215. St Paul reminds us of the awesome reality that the Holy Trinity dwells in us: “we are the Temple of the living God. We have God’s word for it: *I will make my home among them and live with them; I will be their God and they shall be my people*”. St Paul in 2 Corinthians Chapter 6 quoting Leviticus 26:11-12.

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On our Faith journey we find God with us, we encounter Him in different circumstances in life. And, in celebrating the Trinity we celebrate a God who is not solitary, but who lives a communion of life and love that overflows into our world. The Collect of the Mass, before the most recent translation, puts it this way: “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.”

On our journey of Faith we celebrate this week the presence of Mary with us in the memorial of Mary Mother of the Church, which is now an annual memorial, the day after Pentecost. Our Lady was with the disciples as they waited in prayer for the coming of the Holy Spirit. Pope St John Paul II had a mosaic of that ancient image of Mary mounted to the right of the façade of St Peter’s Basilica in Rome a few months after his miraculous recovery from being shot 40 years ago, which he attributed to the intercession of Our Lady of Fatima. Mary, Mother of the Church, we ask you to be with us too as we ponder in our hearts, like you, the great Mystery and Wonder of being called to be bearers of the Divine Godhead in our lives. Amen.

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