

## **Trinity Sunday 2020**

**Opening prayer:** (Michael J. Townsend)

Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we worship and adore you.

Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier, we worship and adore you.

God, ever present with your people, we worship and adore you,

Now and in all eternity. **Amen**

**Hymn 11 (StF) - [Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty](#)**

**Prayer (from the Orthodox Tradition)**

O Heavenly King, O Comforter, the Spirit of truth,

Present in all places and filling all things;

Treasury of good things, and Giver of Life,

Come and dwell in us and cleanse us from our every stain,

And save us, O gracious Lord.

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,**

**Now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.**

(Spend a moment in silent prayer becoming aware of God's presence and God's love. Speak to God of the things that are holding you back from a fuller discipleship and a life in all its fulness.)

When we forget God's steadfast love,

**Move us with the Father's deep compassion.**

When we forget we are God's people,

**Gather us in remembering Christ's body.**

When we forget our place in creation,

**Inspire us with the Spirit of life. Amen.**

**[2 Corinthians 13:11-13](#)**

**[Matthew 28:16-20](#)**

**Hymn 663 (StF) - [I, the Lord of sea and sky](#)**

**Reflections from Abi Alex (Candidate for the Ministry)**

Today we celebrate Trinity Sunday. Falling on the first Sunday after Pentecost, it is one of the few feasts in the Christian calendar that celebrate a doctrine rather than an event. The word "Trinity" is not found in the New Testament. Yet, it is stated many times, by its implication. The concept of the Trinity is a product of the third-century Church, but it is based upon sound Biblical faith. In the gospel of Matthew itself, we find three instances where God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are explicitly mentioned: Matt 3:16; Matt 12:28; and Matt 28:19. This doctrine helps us to understand who God is and what our relationship to Him is all about. John Wesley only preached one sermon with the word "Trinity" in the title: "On the Trinity." However, his whole approach to the Christian life is grounded with the insight that in everything we do, we are surrounded by the work and the presence of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. To be more specific, Wesley understood the work of salvation to be purposed by the Father, purchased by the Son, and applied by the Holy Spirit. The doctrine of Trinity is an essential aspect in our Christian discipleship.

The Gospel reading (The Great Commission) narrates the last encounter of Jesus with his disciples. In this meeting, after the resurrection, Jesus commissions his disciples for ministry. This is one of the most significant Trinitarian passages in the entire New Testament,

and from here we get the Trinitarian formula which the Church has used over the centuries: *in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit* (Matt 28:19b). I want to share two reflections on the implications of the Trinity in our life and mission.

### 1) **Trinity is a recipe for life**

What is a recipe? A “recipe” is a formula or procedure for doing or attaining something. The structure of the Holy Trinity teaches us to live a life with mutual interdependence. Trinity is a community, a community which is designed in a strong relationship, with Father, Son and Holy Spirit existing as a community in mutually loving relationship. We also know that God created human beings in his image. Therefore, once we decide to live following the Trinity, our relationships with others, with God, and with God’s creation, will also be based on a mutual respect for each other. Similar to the Trinity, human relationships must acknowledge and value of difference as well as sameness. The leading Brazilian theologian, Leonardo Boff, said the Trinity provided a “prototype of the human community dreamed of by those who wish to improve society.”

This is so relevant in our present circumstances. We hear a lot of shame-worthy news from the US, about the incidents happening around the death of George Floyd. I don’t wish to explain the details of the issue, as we are quite familiar with the updates. I firmly believe that the underlying problem in violence based on race, gender, religion, or ethnicity, is the lack of mutual respect among people. The Triune God offers us a recipe for a good life through mutual respect, recognition, and interdependence.

### 2) **Trinity is the nexus for love**

What is nexus? It comes from the Latin word *nectō*, which means “bind.” Something which binds together is called nexus. The nexus which binds together Father, Son and the Holy Spirit according to the scripture is none other than love. The best example is seen in John 2 when Jesus clears out the Temple. There is a reference to Psalm 69, when the disciples remember the words “zeal for your house will consume me.” That zeal is Jesus’ love for the Father and for fulfilling the Father’s mission. Jesus does the Father’s will in love, speaks the Father’s words, does the works the Father gives him to perform, keeps the ones his Father gave him, takes on himself the objections against his Father in love (cf. Rom. 15:3). The same love is evident in God, the Father. Remember, at Jesus’ baptism, the Father speaks for himself: “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well-pleased” (Matt 3:13-17).

When we read Gospel narratives, we could see the Father is a Lover, and the Son his beloved; the Son is a Lover, and the Father is the object of his jealous loyalty. In other words, each person *acts* on his love; the Father by giving and disclosing himself to the Son of his pleasure and the Son by his zeal to do his Father’s will.

We are all called to demonstrate this love, a love that is well-defined in the Trinitarian doctrine, to others. Sometimes we can’t do much due to our limitations and situations. For example, we are all locked down because of the global pandemic. But that doesn’t stop us from loving others. God expects us to show our love for others in every little way possible. So, let us love one another, as the Triune God loves: not in word or speech but in truth and action. **In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

**Song:** [Praise the Father, praise the Son](#) (Hillsong)

**Intercessory prayer:** (Christine Odell)

Loving God, our Parent, our Saviour, Spirit of peace, we thank you for the gift of peace; that through our Lord Jesus Christ we can be at peace with you, with one another, with ourselves. We pray for those who are not at peace: for those who live in a turmoil

of guilt towards and anger with you; for those who live in conflict with family, friends or neighbours; for those wracked by anxiety, ill at ease with themselves.

Loving God, our Parent, our saviour, Spirit of peace,  
give them your peace that passes understanding.

Loving God, our Parent, our Saviour, Spirit of Love,  
we thank you for the gift of love, with which, through the Holy Spirit,  
you have renewed and transformed our lives.

We pray for those who long for love: for those who seek you,  
and your parental, saving and empowering love;  
for those who are lonely, neglected or abused  
for those with little self-respect,  
hesitant in embracing the challenge of loving.

Loving God, our Parent, our Saviour, Spirit of love,  
give them the knowledge of your love that never dies. **Amen.**

**We say the Lord's Prayer**

**Hymn 687 (StF) One human family God has made.**

**Litany of Commissioning (World Council of Churches)**

Jesus says, 'Go  
home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and what mercy he  
has shown you' (*Mark 5:19*)

**Yes, we will go!**

Jesus says, 'Go  
first be reconciled with your brother and sister' (*Matt. 5:24*)

**Yes, we will go!**

Jesus says, 'Go  
into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation' (*Mark 16: 15*)

**Yes, we will go!**

And Jesus says, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go  
therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of  
the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded  
you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age' (*Matt. 28:18-20*)

**May the mighty blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, rest and abide with us  
now and always. Amen.**

**[Blessing from around the world](#)**