

Homily notes from Canon Philip Dyson
Sunday 30th May 2021 - The Most Holy Trinity

Readings (Year B): 1st: Deuteronomy 4:32-34. 39-40. Psalm: 32.
2nd: Romans 8:14-17. Gospel: Matthew 28:16-20.

We have all heard of the shamrock, which according to legend, was used by St Patrick to represent the Holy Trinity. Three leaves on one sprig, representing three persons in one God. Earlier Church Fathers used the image of the sun to speak of the Trinity, with the sun representing the Father, the light representing the Son and the heat the Holy Spirit.

Any preacher is wary on this day of straying into heresy, by either getting caught up in trying to explain either a mathematical conundrum or a complex theological mystery. An ancient hymn speaks of ‘Most ancient of all mysteries.’ We cannot explain the mystery.

St Augustine once said “If you can fathom it –It’s not God” Rather, this mystery is one that we know in our bones because it has been marked upon us from the beginning of our life of faith. In today’s reading Jesus confirms that there are three persons in one God. That is what we have known from the start of our faith.

We were signed at our baptism with the sign of the cross. Every time we make the sign of the cross on our bodies, we recall that everything we do begins and ends with God. In our school from their earliest days there our children learn: From my head to my heart, from shoulder to shoulder, I belong to you God my Father.

We mark ourselves with a sign that identifies who we are and whose we are. It is a sign that physically encompasses our entire being, reminding us that we are drawn into the life and love of the Trinity, a life-giving and self-sacrificing relationship between Father and Son in the love of the Spirit. The sign of the cross consecrates and gives purpose to anyone and anything we bless with that sign, for the work of the Trinity is to bring blessing to all creation, and all creation is made for being in relationship with the Creator.

So we learn that being in a loving relationship with God is not an abstract idea, but is a relationship we first encounter through the love of another person for us, usually our parents. And by loving others we embody and deepen our understanding of the meaning of the Trinity.

A mystery, yes, but a revelation by God, through Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Canon Philip Dyson

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