



Reflection for Trinity Sunday 7 / 8 June by Mgr Daniel McHugh

Getting to know you

I had an unexpected visit recently from a young mum bringing me a lovely Sunday lunch. I went to meet her (keeping Social Distance Requirements) at the front door of the apartments where I live. I went outside to speak with her for a few minutes. Then it was that we chatted about family and going back to school and so on. She talked about the time lockdown gave them as a family, how they had started cycling and were enjoying more time together than they could before. She was clearly happy about how the family had grown together. It was music to my ears since we are hearing that the numbers seeking Divorce have gone up by 42% in lockdown. I am reminded of an old song by Julie Andrews from *The King and I*: “Getting to know you, getting to like you ... because of all the beautiful things I’m learning about you day by day!”

The Feast that we celebrate today is seen as the key one in our appreciation of our Catholic Faith: the Holy Trinity, which is central in the Creed we profess every Sunday at Mass. And, like marriage, it can so often be perceived as a problem rather than a joy.

My friend Tim Furth had the following words on his memorial card at his funeral in May 2014 and I think they are words that suit our approach to the Feast:

“Mystery is not a problem to be solved but a gift to be enjoyed”

They are words from Brian Boobyer, a famous cricketer and rugby player from Oxford University. Tim had studied at Oxford and loved Rugby and Cricket, as well as being a good Historian and not bad at Theology either.

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Years ago, when I was studying the central tenets of our Faith, I wished someone had told me that, as we struggle to understand how there can be three persons in one God, the Trinity.

Fr Joseph Pollard, in a homily for this Feast, says that we should not try to understand the three persons in God in the way we understand three human beings, who are separate entities, where the one is not the other and cannot be.

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He describes the three persons in one God in their relationship to each other and in the tasks or operations the Scriptures ascribe to each. “They remain”, he says “one and the same God, accomplishing all things”.

I like this focus on Scripture and on what Jesus tells us there about Himself, the Father and the Holy Spirit. We experience them says Pollard “as God expressing ... love in relationship with us.” And our goal on earth is to ??? or model that.

In celebrating the Trinity, we celebrate not so much a Doctrine as an experience we have of God: something we first celebrated at our Baptism when we had the water of new life poured over us, “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost/Spirit”, when God in his love shared his life with us in love.

As we travel through life we will find happiness not so much in our attainments as in what Jordan Peterson, a well known Canadian Psychologist, calls “the noble aim”; an overarching goal that, ideally, makes the world a better place. To me it is communicating Christ, the way, the truth, the life in his love for everyone. I learn more about that goal in the Scriptures, the teaching of the Church and through others in what they think and say. Some achievements are occasionally seeing that goal being realised along the way: I like it that I can still learn from Tim at whose Funeral I preached the Homily, 6 years ago; and the mum who shared the family meal with me the other Sunday and spoke of Family growing closer, the love of God lived out in practice.

The Feast invites us to explore a world beyond our present limitations, a vast ocean, the many ways we connect to the Mystery of our Being. We make our own the Responsorial Psalm for this Sunday:

*“You are blest, Lord God of our fathers
To you glory and praise for ever more.”*

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