

Reflection for Trinity Sunday, Year B

The bank holiday weekend, this year, would appear to bring us mixed blessings which would seem not to satisfy many of us. You can do this, but you cannot do that. I cannot travel far but I can socialise outdoors if the weather is reasonable. As the city of Glasgow continues to be held in Level 3 for the moment due to the restrictions, we are all beginning to wonder when will it ever end? Sadly, that is not a question that many of us will be able to answer. It is an ongoing step into the unknown. The securities and certainties of certain structures or networks can no longer be guaranteed. We have entered a time in history that can be best described as “the time of the great unknown” because nothing from history has been able to prepare us for these events. It will always remain partly a mystery, which the human mind and heart will struggle to find appropriate answers to let alone ask suitable questions.

As the Church celebrates the Feast of the Most Blessed Trinity, we find ourselves in very similar shoes as people of faith. We will never get to the bottom of our understanding of the Trinity, but we also know that we believe in it in terms of our faith. We make the sign of the cross, often without thinking and we can reflect on the mission statement at the end of St. Matthew's Gospel. Both remind us of the Trinity. It is often described as a perfect communion of love. However, for ourselves, we often think about our own imperfect communions and relationship which may have suffered from a tough or a broken love. Neither of these provide us with easy answers. However, as people of faith, they point us in the right direction. As we gaze into the future and wonder what it might hold for each of us, we should be reminded that the roots of our Christian faith find their consolation in the Blessed Trinity. As we continue to face restrictions throughout the country due to the pandemic, albeit in a reduced way, perhaps these words from Fr. Ivano Millico might offer us the opportunity to reflect on our life, our faith and on the Triune God.

“Before bringing forth words, a prophet bears a vision: God in history. The office of a prophet is to discern the presence and the action of God in the often opaque and painful history of a people, and makes its interpretation resound. “Son of Man, what do you see?”; with this question God formed and reared prophets, a different breed from previous seers or visionaries. This is still true today. What do you see in the midst of our time? A problem to be solved? A suffering to alleviate? A plague to be eradicated? What prophets are able to see are not the mere events surrounding a people, but their meaning and therefore a concrete way to interpret history and meet God inside it.

Addressing his priests as Bishop of Rome, Pope Francis called them “to announce and prophesy the future, like sentinels announcing the dawn that brings a new day”. This “new day”, our future, the so-called New Normal – the pope warned in his letter- will either be something new, or it will be something much worse than before. The future of humanity is something the Lord Jesus us calling the Church, both priest and people, to build up with the eyes of faith: faith in the suffering, death and resurrection of Christ. We call this the Paschal Mystery: the descent of Jesus into darkness, the underworld, his death, his rising, his victory and the gift of his life-giving Spirit. The Paschal Mystery is the only historical event which has happened, and which is still happening, whose proclamation can heal the world and change the interpretation of history. To see this event is to see the “V-shaped curve” so much longed for during the pandemic.

Pope Francis has also warned against many temptations typical of this time: grumbling over the difficulties we face, trying to resolve them only with substantive or palliative activities, waiting for everything to return to normal, ignoring the deep wounds around us, a paralysing nostalgia for the recent past that makes us say “nothing will ever be the same again”, the imbedded logic of repetition or preservation.”