

## Thought for Trinity Sunday

*Matthew 28: 16-20*

So here we are on Trinity Sunday. But why is our Gospel reading about something else entirely? It comes from the very end of Matthew where Jesus, now risen and about to ascend to the Father, commissions his disciples to Go and Tell. So what, if anything, do these verses tell us about the Trinity?

Well, for a start, all three Persons are involved in the story. Jesus, the Son, is preparing to return to the Father who sent him. But once he has gone, the Spirit will come – to be with the disciples always.

Then Jesus commands his disciples not only to go and tell, but to baptise people in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit –to draw them into relationship with God as Trinity.

That word ‘relationship’ is important. The Trinity is a God of Relationship. God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God is Creator, Redeemer and Presence. How can God be both three and one – at the same time? Even St Augustine, perhaps the greatest theologian who ever lived, found himself unable to explain to answer that question. So the likelihood of any of us understanding the Trinity in this life is – well, infinitesimal really. But rather than just shelving the problem, we could try looking at the Trinity from another angle entirely.

St Francis of Assisi – a man who lived by prayer – was once asked whether he believed in the Trinity. He replied that of course he did – he experienced it every day in prayer. That word ‘experience’ is important. How do you experience God?

I’m sure we have all had moments when we have felt simply overwhelmed by the beauty of creation – whether we are bowled over by the night sky, or by the sea – or by a fantastic view. Praise and thanksgiving, awe and wonder bubble up inside us unbidden. We experience God as Creator – and it’s amazing.



What about those times when life buffets us badly, and we feel like children again, longing to be held by loving arms. Then, when it hits us that God became human like us, so that he can share our pain, walk alongside us in our need, and bring us through it to the other side, these are the moments when we find ourselves giving thanks for God incarnate, God who shares our humanity, Jesus the Son.

Then there are the times when we are in difficult or unexpected situations and we don't know what to say – but find we are given the words. There are times when we know we are being carried along by the power of the Spirit, our hearts on fire with love for God. One God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.



Look at it that way and you will probably find that you too have experienced the God who is Trinity.

So when we are commissioned to tell others about The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit, what we are actually being asked to do is to find ways of helping people to know more about God – about God's goodness and greatness, God's love and power, the unknowable mystery that is God. Seeking to know more about God, to experience God in relationship, is the most important thing we can ever do in the whole of our lives. And opening the door to that experience for someone else is the greatest gift we can give them.

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