

NEVER ALONE

God has chosen three different ways to love us. Our Maker, our Model and our Maintainer are always with us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We have never been alone and our good God is never alone. It seems that God needed multiple ways to relate to us. God did not want to be limited to only one expression of caring.

In today's readings, God reveals the mystery of the Trinity as if to finally defy any attempt we might make to limit the scope or breadth of the One who has called us into abundant life.

Our Proverbs extract speaks of God as wisdom - a feminine presence who was 'the firstborn'. Wisdom was there when God created the earth. She was constantly at God's side. She was filled with delight day after day, rejoicing always in his presence, rejoicing in his whole world and delighting in the human race. How come that we have so often failed to see the Holy Spirit as one who is so happy to be alive?

Wisdom or Sophia is the architect of creation. She is called sister, wife, mother, beloved and teacher. Because Jesus was male, her femininity was squeezed out altogether. Clearly God is above gender. It is characteristic of Wisdom that her voice is not heard. Instead so often God is depicted as abuser, torturer and sadist. Think of the Inquisition, the Crusades, slavery, apartheid, homophobia and the subjugation of women. If our world only knew that our God is kindness personified, healer abundant and loving kindness eternal.

In our Gospel we read the sentence spoken by Jesus to his disciples, 'I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear.' While there is nothing that Jesus wishes to keep from them, it would be useless to tell them what they cannot yet understand, cruel to impart knowledge that would only crush them. Wisdom and understanding will be gifted to them at Pentecost by divine intervention.

In the early church, one of the most powerful images used for the Trinity was the image of a dance of mutual delight. The Father, Son and Spirit live in an eternal, joyful, vibrant dance of love and honour, rhythm and harmony in celebration. Our triune God is a never-ending being in relationship, creating and re-creating love. God is community.

The main requirement for community seems to be that you or I have a sense of being part of a group, and that the group acknowledges that and acts on it. Community is God's strategy for reaching the world. As a faith community we model what God has in mind for humanity. Think of what community demands of us – commitment, selflessness, concern for the common good, humility, large doses of patience and forgiveness. These are the very qualities Jesus outlines in the 'sermon on the mount'.

Community exemplifies living 'as if' – as if we are essentially relational beings.

As if we can live together in peace; as if we can commit to something beyond ourselves; as if our faith journey is best done in company; as if there is life beyond death; as if there is a God who gathers us all home; as if we are destined for eternal happiness with our good God. It's enough to make our hearts sing. Here is James K. Baxter's "Song to the Holy Spirit"

*'Lord, Holy Spirit,
you blow like the wind in a thousand paddocks,
inside and outside the fences,
you blow where you wish to blow.*

*Lord, Holy Spirit,
You are the sun who shines on the little plant,
you warm it gently and give it life.
You raise it up to become a tree with many leaves.*

*Lord, Holy Spirit,
You are the mother eagle with her young,
holding them in peace under your feathers.
On the highest mountain you have built your nest,
above the valley, above the storms of the world,
where no hunter ever comes.*

*Lord, Holy Spirit,
You are the bright cloud in whom we hide,
in whom we know already that the battle has been won.
You bring us to our brother Jesus
to rest our heads upon his shoulder.*

*Lord, Holy Spirit,
you are the kind fire who does not cease to burn,
consuming us with flames of love and peace,
driving us out like sparks to set the world on fire.*

*Lord, Holy Spirit,
in the love of friends you are building a new house,
heaven is with us when you are with us.
You are singing your songs in the hearts of the poor.
Guide us, wound us, heal us.
Bring us to the Father.'*

May all of us receive and, in our time, give such grace through our lives as community. AMEN



