

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> June, Trinity Sunday; Benefice patronal service  
Stonegrave; BCP HC

It was a wonderful occasion here on Friday to conduct the wedding of Richard and Dina, to witness a new family being created in this sacred place and to hear again St Pauls' great poem of love from the first letter to the Corinthians reminding us how much God gives us by His endless grace.

After reflecting last Sunday on the Day of Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit to create the Church in a new relationship, today on this Patronal Day for this ancient place of worship, we again consider the Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The Trinity *is the* Great family relationship, hard to fathom and understand but real and unique, who is pure Love. Our Creed reminds us that the Trinity is three persons in perfect relationship. The Father is who He is in relation to the Son, the Son is who He is in relation to the Father, and the Spirit is the active love that binds the Three together. It follows that if we are made in the image of God then we are meant to be relational too, and we are defined by our relationships, with God and one another. The wedding reminded me that at a marriage two persons become one and create a new relationship, made up of two individuals but who become something new together, to share in something sacred. The commitment the couple makes in a marriage is also revealed in other relationships we have, friends, work colleagues, neighbours, and especially the Church community and our own family. In all our relationships we are reminded that we are made to share and depend on one another.

It doesn't end there either because the more we enter into our relationship with the Trinity, the more our other

relationships are transformed, made possible by God the Father becoming like us in His Son who changes us by His Spirit.

By the saving action of the Risen Jesus Christ, God who became human, shifted the ground of every human being whether it is recognized or not. This act tells us who we are in relationship with the Trinity. God's humanity is revealed and transformed in Jesus Christ. In him we do not see just the finest picture of humanity to inspire but we also realise how much we we fall short. But thanks to the saving power of the Trinity, we can experience God himself reaching out to us in our weakness and fallen state and enabling us to be reborn and grow in love. This is the Trinity, pure and simple, perfect eternal Love.

The Trinity is a family, to which God invites us to belong, and we enter God's family when we are baptized. That is why in the Gospel we heard Jesus commanding that all be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. God wishes all to belong to his family.

We like to belong, to a family, to a parish, to a community. No one is an island, we need the love, support, and friendship of others. Not only do we like to belong, but we also need to belong.

Marriage and family life is meant to be the bed rock of a happy society. Sadly, we so often see this fail. My family is everything to me, anyone who hurts my family hurts me, and vice versa. So it is with the Trinity, the perfect family, who also knows pain, sorrow and separation, who has experienced rejection and hate, but nonetheless keeps on giving love, keeps on creating, saving and transforming, because the Trinity cannot do anything else but love in order to exist.

Witnessing the couple give their vows to one another before God on Friday and blessing them in the name of the Trinity reminded me what a joy it is to belong to a loving family. Today then on Trinity Sunday we are too reminded again that we all belong to the family of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, past, present, and future. What a privilege. What a gift of love to which we can gratefully respond, Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and every shall be, world without end.

Thanks be to God. Amen