**fTRINITY A 2023**

If you are expecting an eloquent, theological homily on the Holy Trinity, I’m afraid you will be disappointed! Trinity Sunday, is widely regarded as a preacher’s nightmare. Unfortunately, it is often also a nightmare for you sitting in the congregation, especially when a preacher’s attempt to cast fresh light on the mystery ends either in heresy or platitudes or both. The fact is that the theology of the Trinity is so rich and deep we can only approach it on our knees, so to speak.

Whenever I think of the Holy Trinity, I think of the famous icon by Rublev. It depicts the three Divine Persons sitting at a table. A dish of food lies on the table . But the thing that immediately strikes you is the fact that at the front of the table there is a vacant place. That vacant place is meant to convey openness, hospitality and welcome towards the stranger and outsider.

That vacant place is meant for each of us. It signifies God’s invitation to us to share in the life of the Trinity.

This wonderful feast encourages us to reflect on the quality of our relationships, and, I would suggest specifically to what extent we experience mutual love and unity in our parish community. Do we feel included or excluded? How aware are we of the needs of others? Do we reach out to people we find difficult? How do we as welcome visitors? Are we inclusive or exclusive? Does our behaviour reflect the mutual love and close-knit relationships that we understand to be part of the Christian life?

The Holy Trinity helps us to see that a good relationship is dependent on finding a balance between unity and individuality. We all want to find unity and to feel that we belong - either as members of a family or a community or as partners in a relationship. At the same time we do not want this to be at the expense of our unique individuality. We want our own space. The Trinity gives us something to aim for, to live like those three persons, Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, in close harmony with one another, yet at the same time respectful of each person’s individuality and freedom.

The Holy Trinity also teaches us the importance of sharing. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit share everything in the security of an utterly loving relationship. We humans find it difficult to share, especially material things. And yet when we do share what we have with others we get a glimpse of what it might be like to live like the Trinity where there is perfect happiness in sharing everything.

Finally, the Trinity teaches us what equality means. Isn’t it desperately hard to accept that we are all equal in God’s eyes and yet different? To accept each other for who we are, warts and all? If like the three persons of the Trinity we can learn to accept each other then we are free to be ourselves and we will be happier people.

As we celebrate this feast of the Holy Trinity let us pray that God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit will help us to discover in one another His glory and likeness. Amen.