

## ST CHAD'S CATHEDRAL - TRINITY SUNDAY 30 MAY 2021

*The Spirit makes us cry out, "Abba, Father!"*

Every other month I have a regular meeting with the other members of the Birmingham Faith Leaders Group. The group was formed nearly twenty years ago immediately following the tragic events of 9/11 and the destruction of the Twin Towers in New York. It brings together leaders from the Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist and Christian faiths to work and witness in partnership as much as possible for the good of the city and its different communities. The Faith Leaders Group sits alongside the work of our diocesan Commission for Inter-Religious Dialogue which has fostered fruitful relations with the other faith communities for many years. (I am delighted to see the Commission's former Chairman, Mr Bill Ozanne, here with us today.)

Jews, Muslims and Christians are explicit about our belief in one God and we accept that it is the same one God that we all worship and thank in our prayers. Our Christian faith teaches us that God has revealed through Jesus Christ his inner life and nature, inviting us into the mystery that we call the Blessed Trinity – and that we celebrate today.

When we proclaim in the Creed our faith in one God and three divine Persons we are also professing our trust in the Son of God who has revealed these things to us – and in the Holy Spirit who has enabled us to believe them. We are not spectators simply looking on with awe and wonder at the transcendent God beyond our reach – we are called to participate in the life of God, to share the life of the Blessed Trinity.

Sharing in God's life - as children of the eternal Father, brothers and sisters of the beloved Son and temples of the Holy Spirit – changes our lives in the way that we behave and in our relations with other people. As members of the Body of Christ who have received the gifts of the Holy Spirit we have a mission entrusted to us by the Father to go out into the world and to proclaim the Good News.

As a community of faith we reflect the face of the God in whose name we are sent into the world. Where the Catechism of the Catholic Church speaks about our human nature it reminds us that all human beings are created by God in his own image and this *imago dei* is most perfectly realized in the person of Christ himself. It is in Christ that we have been created in the image and likeness of our Creator.

This image is often dimmed by the impact of sin but its characteristics remain in us and they reflect the freedom, creativity and beauty of God himself. Because we are made in the image and likeness of the Blessed Trinity we also need to be in communion with others to be complete in ourselves – the happiness of others becomes the source of our own happiness.

Whenever we gather together, encounter one another, engage in dialogue, esteem and love each other, then we are responding to and reflecting the *imago dei* that is within each one of us and that is reflected in our life as a Christian community. This desire to reach out and connect with others in dialogue and in service is a reflection of the divine nature at work within us.

We dedicate today to prayer and praise of the Blessed Trinity. The Holy Spirit, given to us by the beloved Spirit, *makes us cry out “Abba, Father!”* The great Dominican preacher, Fr Vincent McNabb, spoke with great joy of the life of the Trinity within us when he said: *When our heart is a home of prayer, God is so much at home with us that all the Blessed Trinity are there too. They break bread with us and make merry: and we too make merry, with the merrymaking of God within us.*

As you know, the Holy Father asked that the month of May should be dedicated to a "marathon" of prayer, to ask for the end of the pandemic, which has afflicted the world for more than a year now, and to ask for the resumption of social and work activities. Pope Francis has involved all the Shrines of Our Lady around the world in this initiative, so that they become vehicles of the prayer of the entire Church.

Today the Rosary is being prayed nationally throughout the day and the hour between 10.00 and 11.00am has been allocated to our Archdiocese. At the conclusion of this Mass I shall lead a recitation of the Luminous Mysteries of the Rosary, uniting our prayers with those of Pope Francis and with pilgrims at the Shrine of the Blessed Virgin of the Holy Rosary of Pompeii in Italy.

Each decade of the Rosary ends in adoration of the Blessed Trinity with our familiar prayer of praise: *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.*