

Trinity Sunday

Prayers, Readings, Reflection and Song.

“Welcome to another short act of worship for the Parish Church of St Martin. For those who are able to follow it as written or listen in, I hope it offers some comfort, encouragement and a sense of being together despite the distance between us.” Rev Jonny



Be still, and draw yourself closer to the God who rests beside you, before you and within you.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All **Amen.**

The Lord be with you

All **And also with you**

We have too often exchanged the worship of the living God for idols of our own imagining. As we gather to offer our praises to the holy and undivided Trinity, and to worship him in spirit and in truth, let us call to mind our sins.

All **Most merciful God,
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
we confess that we have sinned
in thought, word and deed.
We have not loved you with our whole heart.
We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.
In your mercy
forgive what we have been,
help us to amend what we are,
and direct what we shall be;
that we may do justly,
love mercy,
and walk humbly with you, our God.
Amen.**

May the Father forgive *you* by the death of his Son and strengthen you to live in the power of the Spirit all *your* days.

All **Amen**

The Collect for the day

Almighty and everlasting God, you have given us your servants grace, by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity and in the power of the divine majesty to worship the Unity: keep us steadfast in this faith, that we may evermore be defended from all adversities; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Gospel Reading, Matthew 28: 16-20

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All **Praise to you O Christ.**

Reflection

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you."

This statement, the final words of Jesus to his disciples, is often called the 'Great Commission'. I suppose that means it's the rallying cry; the last word; the bottom line. "If you only remember to do one thing, make sure you..."

No wonder then that this instruction has been the bedrock of much of the church's missionary work, certainly for the last thousand years or more. To go and make disciples of all nations and teach them to obey.

Think of the Crusades. The Conquistadors. The Wars of Religion. The conversion of Africa. The colonial occupations of the developing world, where white Europeans landed on foreign shores, with a flag, a rifle and a bible.

I don't doubt for a moment that many of these missionaries were deeply compassionate and decent folk – I know that many of them were; but the inherent damage that they caused came from the way this missionary endeavour was stitched into the fabric of aggressive nationalism, commercialism and conquest.

The consequences of this religious insensitivity echoes through the ages and has led to the much deeper cultural scars and fault-lines that we see today. The police brutality of certain racist officers egged on by populist politicians. The protests that become riots. The anger. The hurt. The pain.

Something, at some point, went badly wrong. Maybe we need to look again at the Great Commission.

At heart, what Jesus is saying, is this: *share the Good News*. At heart it is as simple as that.

So that raises two questions:

- What is the good news?
- How best do we share it?

I remember the final words our bishop said to my cohort before we were ordained, he said 'What is your Good News'? He said, 'if you cannot tell the person next to you what your Good News is, then this ministry is going to be a steep uphill struggle.'

So we turned to our neighbour. I saw Jane, a great friend and fellow priest. And she looked scared. This was the morning of our ordination and I could see a huge weight on her shoulders. I think I probably felt the same way too.

And I said to Jane, 'I have some good news for you. God loves you Jane. And if it's OK, I'd like to give you a hug, to show a little bit of what that love might feel like.' And so we hugged.

We both consented to it. We both needed it. We both remember it to this day.

I didn't need or want Jane to believe anything new. I didn't want Jane to change who she was. In that moment I wanted Jane to know that I saw her, and that I was with her, and that the love of God was with her, even to the end of the age.

That was my Good News, for Jane, in that moment. Love. God's love.

"Love God and love one another. There is no other Commandment greater than this."

So when Jesus says, 'teach them to obey everything I have commanded you', he means just that. Love.

And we all know that teaching love doesn't happen in a classroom, with a teacher at the blackboard, and everyone listening attentively. You cannot get someone to understand love by reciting by rote or writing lines. 'I must love my God, I must love my neighbour...'

No. Love is found, nurtured, cherished. Love is **loved** into being. The Good News is God's love. That is the message.

And that is the method, too.

That second question, how do we best share the Good News?

We share it through love.

That can't have been easy for missionaries of old, when surrounded by flags and rifles. Love doesn't flow easily then.

There is another way, and it, too, is rooted in the Great Commission. 'Do this', says Jesus, 'in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.' Love as the Trinity loves.

The Trinity - Father, Son and Spirit – is dynamic, responsive, sharing. The Trinity is God in Community. Pouring out and gathering in. Giving and receiving. This is how we must share love.

It is a myth that God only gives, and only creates. When Jesus was born in a dusty stable, God received the reality of poverty and mortality. When Jesus died on the cross, God received the suffering of humanity. When the Holy Spirit moves in our world, and flows in our lives, God receives our prayer. God partakes, and shares in our humanity. God gives and God receives.

So when we consider the Great Commission and our imperative to go out into the world and make disciples. We go out as ready to receive as to give. As ready to learn as to teach. As ready to be loved as to love.

This is the way of the Trinity. This is the truth of God's love.

Amen.

Song

**Father, We adore You.
Lay our lives before You.
How we love You.**

**Jesus, We adore You.
Lay our lives before You.
How we love You.**

**Spirit, We adore You.
Lay our lives before You.
How we love You.**

Prayers of Intercession

*Pray for one another – those in our church community
Pray for the Parish, the Island and the World
Pray for the sick, the isolated, the anxious and depressed
Pray for the dying, and those who mourn
Pray for yourselves, and for your own needs*

Lord in your mercy
All **Hear our prayer**

The Intercessions may end as follows

Merciful Father
All **Accept these prayers
for the sake of your son,
our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen**

The Peace

Peace to you from God our heavenly Father.
Peace from his Son Jesus Christ who is our peace.
Peace from the Holy Spirit, the life-giver.
The peace of the triune God be always with you

All **and also with you.**

All Let us pray with confidence, as our Saviour taught us
Our Father
who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from
evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory
For ever and ever. Amen.

The Blessing.

May God the Father bless you;
May Christ take care of you;
May the Holy Spirit enlighten you all the days of your life
The Lord be your defender and keeper of body and soul
Both now and for ever, to the ages of ages

All **Amen.**

(Book of Cerne, 10th century)

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All **In the name of Christ. Amen.**