

Parish of Malin (Clonca) Sunday 7th June 2020
The Most Holy Trinity (Year A Week 2)

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Malin Parish: Resources, news and prayers: **Website:** www.malinparish.ie. **Facebook:** Malin Parish

Details on the times of online **Masses and Prayers** for the Covid 19 Crisis : <https://www.catholicbishops.ie>
Mass Leaflets for each Sunday are available in the churches and parish shops along with the weekly Bulletin.

Sincere Thanks to those who have sent in their collection envelopes, cheques and donations for the Parish during the past week. Please make cheques payable to “Malin Parochial”.

ONLINE YOUTH PROGRAMMES: To access a wide variety of initiatives and activities by Derry Diocesan Youth, visit: Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/DerryDiocesanYouth/> Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/derryyouth/>

'Scripture Saturday with Bishop Donal': Created by Derry Diocesan Youth, Bishop McKeown presents a series of short lessons on the Gospel in easy-to-understand, short (3-4 minute) videos, with tips and references of where and how to use these lessons in your daily life. View the series at: <https://www.derrydiocese.org/scripture-saturday>

Prayer of St. Ioannikos to the Holy Trinity

My hope is the Father. My refuge is the Son.
My shelter is the Holy Spirit. O Holy Trinity, glory to you.

– St. Ioannikos, 9th century (Prayer Book of the Early Christians)

A Sermon on the Holy Trinity

Today's Feast is to celebrate our understanding of the doctrine about God, that we believe in one God in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The challenge for us is to see what that doctrine means for us as we try to live out our faith everyday. What relevance has the Trinity to our lives and to the world?

I am increasingly aware that whenever we speak of God we usually say more than we can possibly ever know and what we do say can never be big enough, beautiful enough, or wild enough to describe who and how God is.

Did you ever try to explain the meaning of the words “love” or “beauty” or “fear” or “grief”? Could you list the reasons why you love that one person above all others. Count the ways and you'll find that words fail. No list is long enough and after a while the reasons begin to sound hollow and empty. Try to describe the beauty of a sunset, a starlit night, or the miracle of your child's birth. Colors and feelings, though real, begin to sound trite, even artificial, compared to the reality. Think about the deepest joys and tragedies of your life. Remember the stories. The facts may be accurate but they can never contain or reveal the fullness and depth of that joy or tragedy. At most they point to them.

The most profound, meaningful, and life-changing things and events of our lives are beyond words, description, and even understanding. We do not explain them, we participate in them. So it is with God.

If we can neither fully explain nor understand love, beauty, miracles, or the stories of our life, how can we ever hope or expect to explain or understand the source of that love, the creator of beauty, the revealer of miracles, or the author of our life? Why would we want to? Why would we distance and objectify that which is most us?

We do not meet God in our explanations, doctrines, or understanding. They are real but they are not the ultimate reality for which we search and long. At their best they are pointers, signposts, and guides along the way; helping to make visible that which is invisible. That is not because the Trinity is unimportant or irrelevant. It is

because the deepest and the most important things of our life can rarely, if ever, be talked about. They can only ever be experienced.

When it comes to speaking about the most profound, meaningful, and life-changing things or events of our lives words fall flat. They only seem to trivialize. So it is with God. Perhaps that is why in the gospel Jesus does not explain or define the Trinity. Instead he speaks of relationship and becoming one with God. Human beings, all nations, the entire world, are to be baptized, washed, and immersed in the name, that is, the qualities and characteristics, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. St. Paul describes these as grace, love, and communion.

We were created to participate in and share the life of the Holy Trinity. It is our spiritual DNA. “Then God said, ‘Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness’” (Gen. 1:26). Trinitarian life is the pattern, the plan, the design from which we were created. It is both the basis and destination of our lives. The inner life of God is a constant expression of love; three equal persons, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, each one dwelling in the other by virtue of an unceasing movement of mutual love.

Our lives, marriages, families, schools, workplaces, parishes, are to become images, icons, reflections of the unity of God. We are invited to join this dance of mutuality and love. Whenever we see the world through another’s eyes, whenever the joys and sorrows of another become our own, whenever we completely give our selves to another holding nothing back, whenever we open our selves to receive without condition the life of another, whenever we both lose and find our life in the life of another then we are most like God. Then we have moved from being created in the image, the pattern, of God and we have begun living *like* God.

You see this in those rare married couples who live and love as one without ever losing their distinct uniqueness as two persons. Together they manifest divine love and reveal God’s life in this world. Ultimately, the Trinity is not about numbers. It’s not a quantity but, rather, a quality, a way of being.

This way of life is one of practical service and active compassion. There are no ranks or levels within the Trinity. The nature of God as a trinity is shown in our struggles against racism, injustice, oppression, and exploitation. It is the basis for living sacrificially in and for the life of another. A child who cares for an aging parent with love, compassion, and self-giving demonstrates God as Trinity.. Similarly the Trinity reveals what true parenthood looks like. The Trinity of God shows the way to find unity with others, not in spite of our differences and variety, but through and because of our differences and variety.

Our understanding of God as three persons in undivided unity helps us understand that our lives are called to be ones that are lived in relationship with others, personal, communal, and loving. This is the life for which we were created. It is the truest pattern of who we are and how we are to live. To turn away from another, to withdraw our life from another, to live in isolation, to exclude another declaring that we have no need of them are the most unnatural and un-godlike things we could do.

Our love for one another and our faith in the Holy Trinity are inseparably related. You cannot have one without the other. A genuine confession of faith in the God as Trinity can only be made by those who show mutual love to one another. Our love for one another is the precondition for a Trinitarian faith and a Trinitarian faith is what completes and gives meaning to our love for another.

This is not easy. It’s dangerous to live a Trinitarian faith. It means love, vulnerability, openness to another, self-giving, sharing and participating in one another’s lives such that we become one. That is how Christ lived and died. That is the resurrected, ascended, and Spirit-led life Christ reveals and offers us. It is how we are to be and live. Our culture neither recognizes nor rewards this kind of life. To the world it looks like weakness and dependency. In God’s world, however, it looks like holiness. Humanity is most authentically itself when it participates in and shows the divine life.

Every Sunday in the Creed we confess our belief in God who is Trinity. We confess the oneness of God as well as the uniqueness of the three persons. This may be what we believe but is it how we live? If our belief in God as three and one is not expressed in and determinative of our relationships can we really claim belief in God as the Trinity?

Every moment, every circumstance, every relationship is one in which we can make real and visible the divine life and love of the Holy Trinity. That is our human calling and responsibility. It is what we were created to do. It is the most natural and godlike thing we ever do.

“So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them” (Gen. 1:27). And then, “God blessed them” (Gen. 1:28).