

**Sunday 26 May 2024**

# Trinity Sunday



**The coronation of the Virgin Mary by the Holy Trinity**  
Alabaster, with traces of original polychrome and gilding: Nottingham, fifteenth century

**Sermon** © Lucie Reilly.

**Liturgy and prayers of intercession** © 2000 The Archbishops' Council.

**Bible readings** © the publishers of the NRSV translation.

The liturgy assumes the service is Eucharistic. The prayers of consecration are included at the end.

The hymn can be accessed via a YouTube link. Please click on the links.

To see service transcripts from previous weeks, please visit the page,  
<http://www.medlockhead.co.uk/resources/index.htm>

## Introduction and welcome

HYMN 1 [Father in Heaven](#)

[\(click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

## The Welcome

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.**

## The Preparation

**All Almighty God,  
to whom all hearts are open,  
all desires known,  
and from whom no secrets are hidden:  
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts  
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,  
that we may perfectly love you,  
and worthily magnify your holy name;  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

The first commandment is this:

‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,  
with all your soul, with all your mind,  
and with all your strength.’

And the second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’

There is no other commandment greater than these.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

**All Amen. Lord, have mercy.**

Holy, holy, holy.

When our eyes have seen the Lord of hosts we echo the words of Isaiah,  
‘Woe is me! I am doomed’.

We long for the fire of God’s cleansing to touch our unclean lips,  
for our iniquity to be removed and our sins wiped away.

So we meet with God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with confession on our lips.

**All** Almighty God, our heavenly Father,  
we have sinned against you  
and against our neighbour  
in thought and word and deed,  
through negligence, through weakness,  
through our own deliberate fault.  
We are truly sorry  
and repent of all our sins.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
who died for us,  
forgive us all that is past  
and grant that we may serve you in newness of life  
to the glory of your name.  
**Amen.**

Almighty God,  
who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you,  
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,  
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,  
and keep you in life eternal;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All** Amen.

## **The Gloria**

This version of the Gloria is sung to the tune of 'the **Ash Grove**'.

**All** Sing glory to God in the height of the heavens,  
salvation and peace to his people on earth;  
our King and our Saviour, our God and our Father,  
we worship and praise you and sing of your worth.

Creation unites in the power of the Spirit,  
in praise of the Father, through Jesus the Son.  
So complex, so simple, so clear, so mysterious,  
our God ever Three yet eternally one.

Lord Jesus, the Christ, only Son of the Father,  
the lamb who has carried our burden of shame,  
now seated on high in the glory of heaven,  
have mercy upon us who call on your name.

**Refrain**

**For you, only you, we acknowledge as holy,  
we name you alone as our Saviour and Lord;  
you only, O Christ, with the Spirit exalted,  
are one with the Father, for ever adored.**

**Refrain****The Collect for Trinity Sunday**

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.**

**First reading**

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty, and the hem of his robe filled the temple. Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. And one called to another and said,

‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;  
the whole earth is full of his glory.’

The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. And I said, ‘Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!’

Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. The seraph touched my mouth with it and said, 'Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out.' Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I; send me!' *Isaiah 6:1-8*

This is the Word of the Lord

**All Thanks be to God.**

## Second reading

A reading from St Paul's Letter to the Romans

So then, brothers and sisters, we are obligated, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—for if you live according to the flesh, you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, 'Abba! Father!' it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs: heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if we in fact suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him. *Romans 8:12-17*

This is the Word of the Lord

**All Thanks be to God.**

**HYMN 2 Father, we adore you** [\(please click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

## Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John

**All Glory to you O Lord.**

There was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with that person.' Jesus answered him, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.' Nicodemus said to him, 'How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be

born?' Jesus answered, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, "You must be born from above." The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.' Nicodemus said to him, 'How can these things be?' Jesus answered him, 'Are you the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

'Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen, yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

'For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

'Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him.'

*John 3:1-17*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

**All Praise to you O Christ.**

## Sermon

Today we celebrate Trinity Sunday, the cornerstone of Christian our faith: one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, or as the old hymn puts it: 'God in three Persons, blessed Trinity.' I think it's appropriate to start in they way most of our services and sermons start.... With the Holy Trinity, may I speak in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

Today we have heard what has to be one of the most famous, well know and quoted passages in the bible John 3:16...

For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son,  
that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

No matter how many times we hear this verse repeated, it still holds its power to dumbfound us, to humble, amaze, move and inspire; to bring us to our knees in worship and thanksgiving, or to lift us up in joyful wonder. John 3:16 is a great text for the Feast of the Holy Trinity, because today especially we take step back, simply

to praise God: for what he is, and for what he has done; to contemplate his greatness and glory, and to contemplate our eternal destiny with him.

God, says St John, so loved the world. Well, immediately we are confronted by a sort of irony, a contradiction if you like. We know from divine revelation, as well as from natural reason, God is an infinite Being; incomprehensible and indefinable; and absolutely unique, eternally in perfect beatitude; needing nothing outside himself; all-holy, all-good, all powerful, all-knowing and not some sort of abstract or impersonal force, but ever living, and knowing and loving.

As for 'the world ...', St John seems to be defining it precisely as that which is set against God; the world of sin; the world already under judgement and condemnation; the world doomed to perish. The world did not know him, says John in his Prologue (1:10). Or as Jesus says to his Jewish persecutors: 'You are of this world. I am not of this world' (8:23). The whole world is in the power of the Evil One ... as John says in his first Letter, 'If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in him' (5:19; 2:15). So, how can God love this world? St John's theory coincides with St Paul in his letter to the Romans: he writes: 'God has shown his love for us, in that Christ died for us while we were yet sinners' (Romans 5:8). Or again, to the Ephesians: 'By nature we were children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead through our sins, made us alive together with Christ' (Ephesians 2:3-4).

God's love this world is so vast that he gave his only begotten Son. And here already we glimpse the manifestation of the Holy Trinity. For in Christ we know that God the Father has a unique Son. As we proclaim, out loud each week in the Creed, the Son is eternally begotten from the Father; but, he is not less than the Father, for he himself also is fully God. As the theologians say, he is God without confusion of Person, or division of substance. St John also calls him God's Word, or perfect self-expression, who was with God, and who was God; through whom all things were made. In giving his only Son, then, God has given us the greatest possible gift; a gift of infinite worth; in principle, nothing more could be given. Or to adapt famous words of St John of the Cross: in giving us his Son, God has given us everything at once. Beyond that he has nothing more to give.

God gave his only Son. There's a double sense to this word 'gave'. It refers in the first place to the Incarnation. By nature, we would be incapable of receiving so great a gift. But when God's Son shared in our humanity, we became able, through that, to share in his divinity. But then God went even further. He 'gave' his only Son; and also 'gave up' his only Son: to die on the Cross. In this way Christ took on and overcame our sin. And in this way, he manifested God's love for us to the end (13:1).

Before the mystery of God's love for us, we can only fall silent, and simply try to open our hearts, in order to receive it ever more. Why does God love us? God loves because he loves; he loves because, as St. John says, 'God is love' (1 John 4:8). And here we pivot to the more hidden Person of the Holy Trinity; because God's love is assumed in a particular way when it comes to the Holy Spirit. As St. Paul says again to the Romans, God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us (5:5).

Of course, each of the Divine Persons is love, and each is blessed through the eternal exchange of love between the Three. But it could be said that the Holy Spirit is the extensive love of the Father for the Son, and of the Son for the Father, and as such the Holy Spirit proceeds eternally from both. God has no need to turn this love outwards. But he *has* chosen to do so: first of all, through Creation; but **then**, so much more, through the mission of the Son and of the Holy Spirit into this world, in order that we might have eternal life!

This 'eternal life' also could be credited, in a special way to the Holy Spirit. As Jesus says to the Samaritan woman, he is that gift of living water in us welling up to eternal life (John 4:14). We discern the presence of the Spirit also in our very ability to believe, and to be transformed in love.

Yes: everything, everything here is gift, grace, and blessing. Not a small gift, not a limited gift, not a gift we could ever expect, or ever be found worthy of receiving: but a gift that is limitless, infinite, complete and eternal.

Today on Trinity Sunday, I ask: let us, please, not under-estimate what God has done for us in Jesus Christ our Lord. In him, says St John, we have life (cf. for example John 20:31; 1 John 4:9, etc). From being God's enemies, we are now identified with God's beloved Son. From being cut off from God, we are now able to dwell with each of the Divine Persons, and our heaven is able to begin here in this world and we are able to stand ready to dedicate our whole life to God, and to his worship, because we believe, we know and we trust that all of this is true.

All this allows us to be here today and to participate in the Holy Eucharist, in which all of it is somehow articulated, and contained. Here, through sacramental signs, we are given and we receive God. Here Christ is given up for us. Here we eat his flesh, given for the life of the world (6:51), and we drink his blood, poured out for our salvation, and our eternal joy.

Amen.



## The Creed

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,  
the source of all being and life,  
the one for whom we exist?

**All We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,  
who took our human nature,  
died for us and rose again?

**All We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,  
who gives life to the people of God  
and makes Christ known in the world?

**All We believe and trust in him.**

This is the faith of the Church.

**All This is our faith.**

**We believe and trust in one God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.  
Amen.**

## Prayers of intercession

We come boldly to the throne of grace,  
praying to the almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit  
for mercy and grace.

**All We plead before your throne in heaven.**

Father of heaven, whose love profound  
a ransom for our souls has found:  
We pray for the world, created by your love,  
for its nations and governments ...  
Extend to them your peace, pardoning love, mercy and grace.

**All We plead before your throne in heaven.**

Almighty Son, incarnate Word,  
our Prophet, Priest, Redeemer, Lord:  
We pray for the Church, created for your glory,  
for its ministry to reflect those works of yours ...  
Extend to us your salvation, growth, mercy and grace.

**All We plead before your throne in heaven.**

Eternal Spirit, by whose breath  
the soul is raised from sin and death:  
We pray for families and individuals, created in your image,  
for the lonely, the bereaved, the sick and the dying ...  
Breathe on them the breath of life  
and bring them to your mercy and grace.

**All We plead before your throne in heaven.**

Thrice holy! Father, Spirit, Son,  
Mysterious Godhead, Three in One:  
We pray for ourselves,  
for your Church, for all whom we remember before you ...  
Bring us all to bow before your throne in heaven,  
to receive life and pardon, mercy and grace for all eternity,  
as we worship you, saying,

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Amen.**

Merciful Father,

**All accept these prayers  
for the sake of your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ.  
Amen.**

## The Peace

The peace to this house from God our heavenly Father.  
The peace to this house from his Son who is our peace.  
The peace to this house from the Holy Spirit, the life-giver.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

**All And also with you**

**HYMN 3 Holy, holy, holy is the Lord** (please click on this link to hear the hymn)

The liturgy of the Communion Service appears below

## The Dismissal

The Lord God almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
the holy and undivided Trinity,  
guard you, save you,  
and bring you to that heavenly city,  
where he lives and reigns for ever and ever.  
And the blessing of God the Almighty  
be with you now and remain with you always.

**All Amen.**

**HYMN 4 Holy, holy, holy** (please click on this link to hear the hymn)

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

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

## The Liturgy of the Sacrament

### **Eucharistic Prayer** (prayer E)

The Lord be with you

**All and also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**All We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**All It is right to give thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.  
For with your only-begotten Son and the Holy Spirit  
you are one God, one Lord.  
All that you reveal of your glory,  
the same we believe of the Son  
and of the Holy Spirit, without any difference or inequality.  
We, your holy Church, acclaim you,  
Father of majesty unbounded,  
your true and only Son, worthy of all worship,  
and the Holy Spirit, advocate and guide.  
Three Persons we adore,  
one in being and equal in majesty.  
And so with angels and archangels,  
with cherubim and seraphim,  
we sing for ever of your glory:

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father,  
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;  
and as we obey his command,  
send your Holy Spirit,  
that broken bread and wine outpoured  
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends  
and, taking bread, he praised you.

He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:  
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;  
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.  
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:  
Drink this, all of you;  
this is my blood of the new covenant,  
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,  
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross.

Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,  
we proclaim his death and resurrection  
until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith:

**All Christ has died.**  
**Christ is risen.**  
**Christ will come again.**

Lord of all life,  
help us to work together for that day  
when your kingdom comes  
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,  
gather us in your loving arms  
and bring us with all the saints  
to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,  
for ever and ever.

**All Amen.**

## **The Lord's Prayer**

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**All**      **Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours  
now and for ever. Amen.**

## **Breaking of the Bread**

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**All**      **Though we are many, we are one body,  
because we all share in one bread.**

**All**      **Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world,  
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world,  
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world,  
grant us peace.**

Draw near with faith.

Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ  
which he gave for you,  
and his blood which he shed for you.

Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you,  
and feed on him in your hearts  
by faith with thanksgiving.

**All** We do not presume  
to come to this your table, merciful Lord,  
trusting in our own righteousness,  
but in your manifold and great mercies.  
We are not worthy  
so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.  
But you are the same Lord  
whose nature is always to have mercy.  
Grant us therefore, gracious Lord,  
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ  
and to drink his blood,  
that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body  
and our souls washed through his most precious blood,  
and that we may evermore dwell in him,  
and he in us. Amen.

Communion is distributed.

### **Prayer after Communion**

Almighty and eternal God,  
you have revealed yourself as  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
and live and reign in the perfect unity of love:  
hold us firm in this faith,  
that we may know you in all your ways  
and evermore rejoice in your eternal glory,  
who are three Persons yet one God,  
now and for ever.

**All** Amen

**All** Almighty God,  
we thank you for feeding us  
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.  
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies  
to be a living sacrifice.  
Send us out in the power of your Spirit  
to live and work  
to your praise and glory.  
Amen.