

Homily – John 16: 12-15

Trinity Sunday

11th/ 12th June, 2022 Riverstown / Sooeey

Years ago, a missionary who worked in rural Africa returned home to England for a short vacation. While he was home, he happened to run across a beautiful sundial. Immediately he got an idea. He thought to himself, “That sundial would be ideal for my villagers in Africa. I could use it to teach them to tell the time of the day.” The missionary bought the sundial, crated it up, and took it back to Africa. When the village chief saw it, he insisted that it be set up in the centre of the village. The villagers were thrilled with the sundial. They had never seen something so beautiful in their lives. They were even more thrilled when they learned how it worked. The missionary was delighted by everyone’s response to his sundial. But then, he was totally unprepared for what happened a few days later. The people of the village got together and built a roof over the sundial to protect it from the rain and the sun! —

Well! Today we celebrate the solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity: a mystery of God Himself. And this mystery teaches us that there are three distinct Persons in one God, sharing the same Divine Nature: co-equal and co-eternal. And now, you must be just wondering how

this story relates to today's feast – the feast of the Holy Trinity.

Well, I think the sundial is a lot like the Holy Trinity, and we Christians at times are a lot like those villagers. The most beautiful revelation of our Faith is the teaching about the Holy Trinity, namely, that God is Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. But instead of putting the teaching to work in our daily lives, we have built a roof over it, just as the villagers did over their sundial. For many of us the Trinity seems of little practical value, when it comes to our daily lives. We treat it more like an ornament of our Faith.

Now, our faith as Catholics tells us that the Church itself is a fruit of the Trinity. The Church is called: “the gift of God the Father, the body of Christ the Son, and the fellowship in the Spirit”. And the mission of a Christian is to take everything to the Father, through Christ the Son, in the Spirit.

Now, what about the central mystery of the Church which is celebrated in the community, ‘the Eucharist’? There are three Greek words which express the Trinitarian aspects of the Eucharist. First of all, it is the *Eucharistia*, ‘thanksgiving to the Father’. And how do we give thanks to the Father? *Anamnesis*: that is, recalling what the Son has done. And, we do it through

the power of the Spirit: *Epiclesis*. So, the mystery of the Eucharist is seen in Trinitarian terms.

And then we have all the creeds, starting from the simplest creed, 'the sign of the Cross', and then the more elaborate ones: 'the Apostles' creed and the Nicene Creed'. All these would go to tell us that we do not believe in God as an abstract reality, but we believe in God who is Father, Son and Spirit.

And far from being a speculative mystery, the Trinity is the mystery of salvation. God has a plan of salvation for us. The Father is God for us, the Son is God with us, and the Spirit is God in us. So, it is a mystery of love through which God is telling us: "He is the God who saves us, 'the Abba'. He is the God who becomes one like us, 'the Emmanuel' and He is the God who dwells within us, 'the Spirit'.

So, the Trinity is a mystery of salvation: a wonderful mystery which the Church has been trying to articulate. It will always remain a mystery and we will never be able to exhaust it.

And you have that famous example about St. Augustine, of how he was wandering along the sea shore and then at a certain moment he saw a little boy trying to scoop water into a little hole in the sand and he asked the child: "What are you doing, my child?" And the child replied with an innocent smile: "I am trying to put the ocean in this

hole". "But that is impossible, my dear child," said Augustine. The boy stood up, looked straight into his eyes and replied, "If you think you can comprehend the Trinity and explain the Trinity, I can do this." Then he vanished.

So, the Trinity remains always a mystery, but a mystery of love. God is not revealing some abstruse Mathematical problems to us how he is one and three. But God is telling us: "He is the God who saves, the *Abba*. He is the God who becomes one like us, the *Emmanuel* and He is the God who dwells within us, the *Spirit*."

It would mean that we are called to live this Trinitarian mystery. And we live it by building up the kingdom of God as children of the Father '*Abba*', by imitating the second person '*the Son*' as disciples of Christ, and by remaining open to the workings of *the Spirit* within us.

Let me conclude my homily with a little anecdote: A monk was once asked by a group of pilgrims to help them find God. "Where is God", they asked. The monk just shook his head and replied: "No one can help you find where God is". And to their question "why", the monk said: "Well! God is everywhere. It is almost like asking a fish where the ocean is. You can't ask that, because it is in it". And then the monk went on to say: "that is how we are with the Lord. We are immersed in God's love".

And this love, dear friends, can embrace all of humanity. And God invites us today to share in the pain and the struggles of our neighbour in order to bring His infinite love into their lives. And that is the discipleship to which each and every one of us is called.

And on this feast day, let us join St. Richard of Chichester and pray on our knees: “Dear Lord, ‘of Thee, three things I pray: To see Thee more clearly, To Love Thee more dearly, and to follow Thee more nearly day by day, **Amen**”.