



Sunday Reflection

Trinity Sunday



in the Charges of St Margarets, Renfrew
& St Johns, Johnstone

For Sunday 7 June 2020

Trinity Sunday

while all Church worship in the buildings is suspended

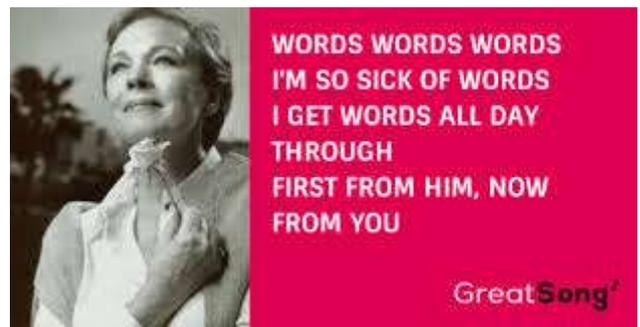
Today we worship God who is
Father, Son and Holy Spirit: Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.
We have reason to celebrate because we too are invited into this divine
relationship.

Reflection for this week's Gospel

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit... And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20

An Illustration to set the scene

"Words, words, words! I'm so sick of words! If you're in love, show me! Sing me no song, read me no rhyme, don't waste my time, show me!"



This is the cry of Eliza Doolittle in *My Fair Lady*. She could well be speaking of all the many words that will be spoken today by preachers trying to explain the Holy Trinity. The trouble is, none of those clever words will work. There are innumerable attempts at explanation: it's like a three-leaf clover; or three things that are

the same but different – ice, water and steam. Or it's like how one person can be three different persons at the same time – a daughter, a mother and a sister. The truth is that even if we could find the best formula for the Trinity, it wouldn't help us. The invitation today is not to find a formula, but to respond to the nature of God who is Trinity. The Trinity tells us that God is, for want of a better word, **a community – of perfect, unbroken, personal relationships.** God is love, and love cannot exist except in relationship.

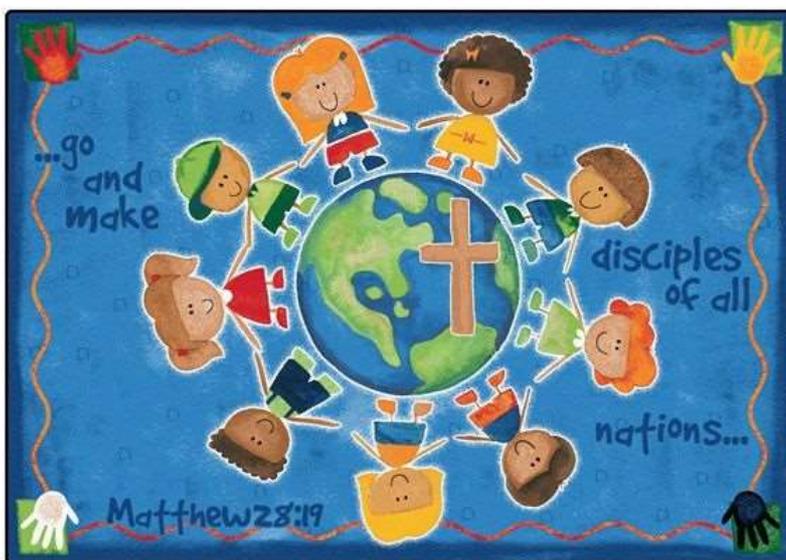
Looking at the teaching of the Gospel

The Gospel reading for this Trinity Sunday is the end of Matthew's Gospel, commonly referred to as the Great Commission. It takes place in the days after the resurrection. The disciples are still trying to make sense of what has happened. Jesus has been appearing to many people, but faith in him is not straightforward. Matthew makes clear that even in this final resurrection appearance to the eleven disciples, some worshipped but some doubted. It is into that mix of faith and doubt that Jesus speaks these extraordinary words. He tells them that he has all authority in heaven and on earth – nowhere, no one, nothing is outside his jurisdiction. And he gives them two things – a task and a promise. These two things go together. He tasks them with going and making disciples of all nations. Interestingly, Matthew makes no mention of requiring people to have faith before baptism. The thrust of Matthew's Gospel has always been about the inclusion of all people in the Gospel. Jesus is not just for the Jews who believed in him, he is for the Gentiles – that means everyone. So his disciples are to baptise people in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit – the Trinity. Most contemporary scholars see this triadic baptismal formula as authentic – it used to be assumed that the words had been added in by the early Church. However, most wonderfully of all, Jesus gives them a promise – he will be with them always.

How can we reflect on the application to our lives

In baptism, through God's great grace, people come into this divine relationship that is God. And it doesn't end there – loved eternally by God, we are to love one another, and so to reflect the image of God in us. This is the Great Commission – that, by our lives, all people may know that they too are invited into God's great love.

We are made in the image of God. That means we belong in relationship – in our isolation of Phase 1 we have been learning to express our relationships in new ways, using our current technologies. None of us is designed to be self-sufficient. We need each other – to be fully human, we must love and be loved. This is one of the reasons why we need the Church, because the Church puts us into relationship with others. Each one of us exists to be a channel of God's love to others, even those we find most difficult to be with. A perfect Church would be a community of people in perfect relationships with each other, and it would be continually inviting others in. That way we would perfectly reflect God the Holy Trinity. We fail, of course, and that's why we have a confession and absolution in every service, to mend what

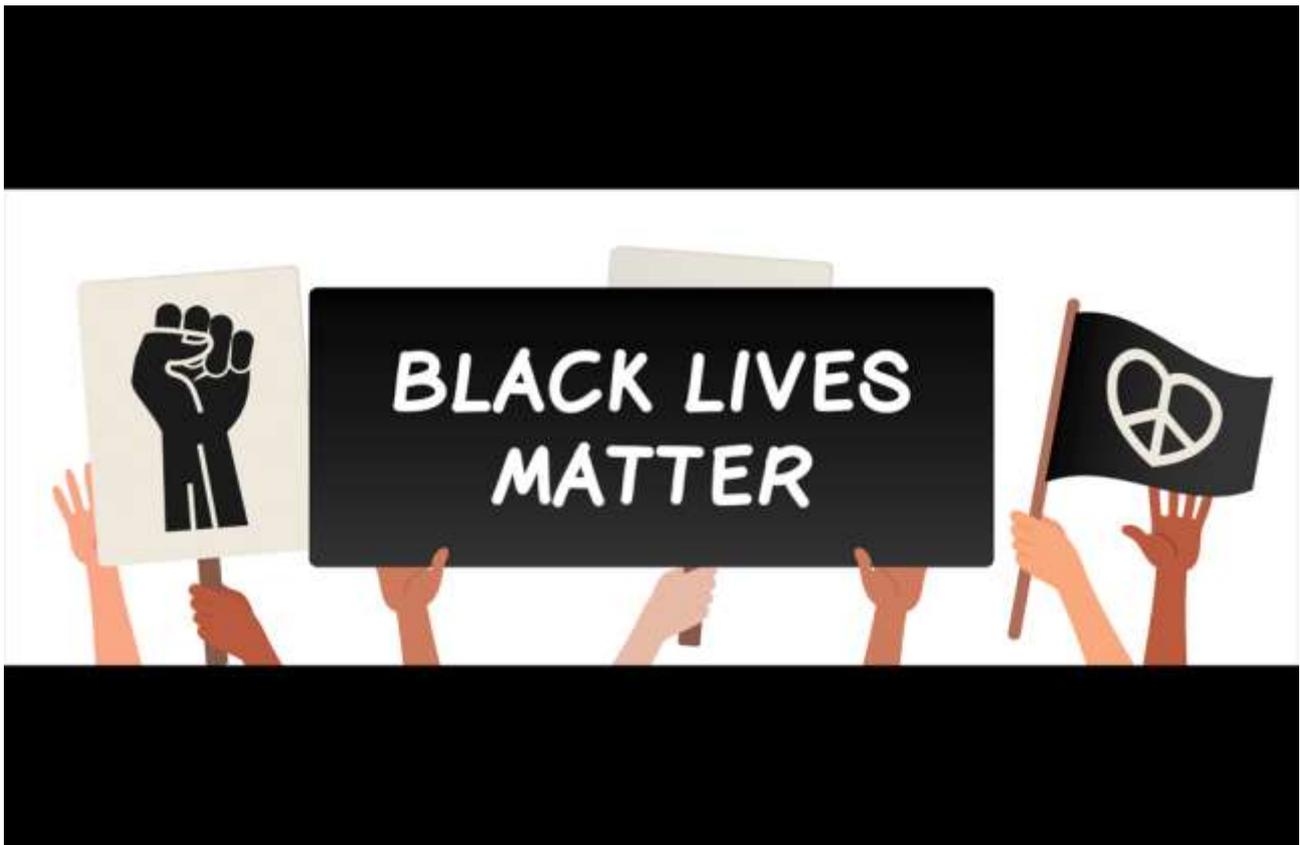


is broken, as Paul urges the Corinthians. Jesus calls us to know the eternal love and presence of God. From the security of the knowledge of the love of God, who is with us always, he calls us to love all people – and in this week we are

reminded of our social need to actively sort out where our

society and systems are being prejudiced to people of different coloured skins as we have been reminded that black lives matter – all lives matter. It is a tremendous commission, and an even more tremendous promise. And it is not just clever words – this is life in all its fullness.

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit... And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:19-20



This image is from <https://www.bedfordindependent.co.uk/peaceful-black-lives-matter-protest-taking-place-in-bedford-town-centre/> What does it say to you? How does it make you reflect on what is happening in our world this week? What does it say to you about our Christian doctrine of the Holy Trinity? What do you feel? How will you bring those feelings to God in prayer this week? DPes it engage you faith is a fresh way?

Please share your response to this reflection to Rector@SECStJohnStMargaret.org.uk – did anything speak to you? Did you feel challenged, angered, consoled by something in the words? How did God’ spirit move you as you read it? Have you shared the words with someone else? Is this a worthwhile thing to make available to folk whilst we cannot meet for corporate worship to share in word and sacrament? What are your thoughts?

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