



# Praying Together



*Trinity Sunday Number nine*

*June 2020*

Dear Friends,

The picture this week is one of my favourite pieces of religious art. This icon is by a Russian artist Andrei Rublev (1360-1427). It is entitled *The Trinity* and hangs in the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow. There is a lot I could say about this painting, maybe one day I will get the chance to talk about it with you in more depth. This depiction of the Trinity

has always struck me, firstly because all the figures look very similar. I see in this picture a scene of equality and a comfort at being in each other's company, a serenity at being together. Which is the Father, Son or Holy Spirit? It does not matter. What matters to me is that, if you look closer, there is a space for a fourth person. The way the figures are seated, in an outlooking fashion, is almost as if they are welcoming you in to join them in that space at the table. Take a closer look...what do you see?

I am writing about the Trinity this week because this Sunday is Trinity Sunday where we reflect upon the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the three in one. The word comes from the Latin: *trinus*, meaning 'threefold'. One God in three persons. The three persons are distinct and yet are one substance. The Trinity and its concept have been much discussed and many find it difficult to understand. To try and explain it simply, the comparison to water is used. We experience water in three distinct forms, solid ice, liquid water and water vapour (steam). Three very different forms but all one substance.

Ray Simpson in his lovely book *Celtic Daily Light* (2003), describes it like this:

*"Sometimes the sun has been used as an illustration of the Trinity. There is the sun itself, which the human eye cannot directly look at, (God); there is the single ray that we can see at a particular time and place, (Jesus); and there is the sun's warmth which radiates, (Spirit)."*

Here is a lovely little prayer about 'the three'; I found it in *A Pocket Book of Celtic Prayers* by Janet Donaldson:

*Three things are pleasant in a home:*

*good food upon the table; a man who lovingly kisses his wife; children who refrain from quarrelling.*

*Three attitudes are godly in the Church:*

*true love of the Lord himself; kindness amongst the pews; a fair dealing with self.*

*Three ideas enlarge a person's mind:*

*a humble heart; a generous soul; honesty in business.*

*Three things I wish for myself:*

*true spiritual beauty; a heart of giving; eyes with pools of meaning.*

**From the Bible: Matthew 28: 16-20 (our lectionary reading for Trinity Sunday)**

*“Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshipped 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.’”*

**Let Us Pray:**

Living Love, beginning and end,  
giver of food and drink, clothing and warmth,  
love and hope: life in all it's goodness -

**I praise and adore you**

Jesus, wisdom and word: lover of outcasts,  
crucified and risen: life in the midst of death -

**I praise and adore you.**

Holy Spirit, storm and breath of love;  
bridge builder, eye-opener,  
waker of the oppressed, unseen and unexpected,  
untameable energy of life -

**I praise and adore you.**

Holy Trinity, forever one, whose nature is community;  
source of all sharing in whom we love, and meet, and know our neighbour:  
life in all its fullness, making all things new:

**I praise and adore you. Amen**

*Brian Wren*

Our hymn for this week, from our own Bishop Heber!

*Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God almighty!  
Early in the morning our song will rise to thee;  
Holy, Holy, Holy! Merciful and mighty!  
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!*

*Holy, Holy, Holy! All the saints adore thee,  
casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea  
cherubim and seraphim falling down before thee,  
which wert, and art, and evermore shalt be.*

*Holy, Holy, Holy! Though the darkness hide thee,  
though the eye made blind by sin thy glory may not see,  
only thou art holy, there is none beside thee,  
perfect in pow'r, in love and purity.*

*Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God almighty  
All thy works shall praise thy name, in earth, and sky, and sea  
holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!  
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!* (Text: Reginald Heber 1783-1826)

*May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be  
with you all. (2 Corinthians 13:14)*

***Ali, on behalf of St Michael's Church, Marbury.***