

PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE – *Trinity... the God We Need!*

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Dear Friends

When I came across an interesting quote from St Augustine recently, I wondered whether I should write this week's column at all! In Sermon 22, he says, *'If you wanted to say something worthy of God you would say nothing at all!'* Basically, we are incapable of understanding God as he is, so any and every image or word we use falls short of the reality. Yet our restless search must go on because it is the search for life's meaning and for God.

Whenever we pray individually or as a community, we are engaging with a God who is Triune, a Trinity of Persons. Some may wonder if their prayer or their image of God has changed at all since they were small. Our image of God is all-important, so important that we need to take time to reflect on this. Our personal image of God may reflect our image of ourselves. For example, when we are weighed down by our sinfulness, we may see God as stern and punishing. As we mature in our relationship with God, we come to see him as a welcoming, forgiving God, the latter image being more in tune with the Scriptures.

At all times, we need to pursue the truth about God. God is serious about his relationship with us because we are indeed gifted by the revelation of God's inner life – the Trinity. What member of the Trinity do you normally relate to? We can become confused easily. In a very real sense, God is like a family. Our celebration of Father, Son and Holy Spirit is not to overwhelm us but to invite us into closer relationship with him. Like a family where children really enjoy and participate in the life and love of parents, God wants that for us too.

So we are drawn into the very life of God himself and we live out that bond in our relationships with one another, *'...it is by God's gift that we are one with each other,'* St Augustine tells us (On the Trinity 6.5.7). One writer reminds us that the Trinity is not a puzzle but a mystery. We solve puzzles but not mysteries. The more we delve into a mystery, the more we find there is to delve into (Fr Tom Cahill, Intercom May 2010, p 41).

It's easy to forget how much a part of our lives the Trinity is. We bless ourselves often in this name; we are baptised in this name and are blessed in the Sacraments in this name; the cross we wear reminds us of God's extraordinary generosity and ongoing love for us. The Risen Jesus missions us to go forth and spread the Good News in this name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Our harmonious life in family and community both expresses the life of the Trinity and empowers us to be drawn into that very life of God.

Let's not make God small, but instead allow this expansive God to permeate our very being and our whole life. To quote Jesus' words from last Sunday's Gospel (John 14), *'If anyone loves me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him and make our home with him ... the*

Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all I have said to you.'

Fr Dave