

Trinity Sunday 2025- the Trinitarian Shape of all Loving and Knowing.

The open door of heaven invites us to step into the life and love of God the Holy Trinity in all forms not only of our loving but in our knowing, in all forms of knowledge of the Truth.

Isaiah 6.1-8, Revelation 4.1-end, John 3.1-15

And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come

‘One by one, we were created for [‘Infinite Love’], yea, for God himself, Who is love ... And since we were made for God, nothing out of God, could content our souls’.¹ So said Dr Pusey in his last sermon at Christ Church in a Trinity term not many more than 140 years ago.

Trinity Sunday invites us to celebrate and adore, not first what God does for us, but who God is. A door is open in heaven, and we are invited to see in symbolic form that at the beginning and end of all things is divine love, sufficient in itself and overflowing in all that exists. Much more than an emotion, the great poet Dante sees this as the love the moves the sun and stars: uncreated, and inexhaustible, the fundamental force that creates, sustains and orders the entire universe.

In Dr Pusey’s words again, ‘that boundless ocean of love which God is ... flows as the very Being of the Eternal Father into the Coeternal Sun’, this love ‘goes forth into God the Holy Ghost, and from Him goes back in one Eternal flow of Infinite Unchanging Bliss’.² When the Te Deum is sung at conclusion of mass, we are invited not only to adore this exchange of divine love but to step into it.

How our loves may participate in this love, how our lives may be ordered by divine love in the way we love one another and love God, is the primary subject of the course of readings which will furnish our minds and feed our souls in the long green season of Trinitytide.

The Primary address today will be that given by the Vice Chancellor at the end of mass, so these reflections on the Trinitarian shape of our knowledge and love will be very brief.

The open door of heaven reveals that our worship here today is not a stand-alone event: our hearts are lift up to the Lord, and we are already and today participating in the worship of heaven. There, in heaven, in the fullness of the presence of God and all the company of heaven, worship is no chore or burden, no feeble second best, but the joy-filled response to what is most beautiful, most worthy of the fulness of our affection and attention. For us who so much need to be transformed and purified by the divine fire that touched Isaiah’s lips, the joy we have in seeing God comes also with struggle and even disappointment.

This participation in the life of God the Holy Trinity is not a reality confined to churches or to people who call themselves Christian. There is no outside the overflowing communion of divine love. The pursuit of truth and knowledge which is the vocation of this University and of all Universities has a Trinitarian character, shape, and dynamism. All our discreet acts of seeking knowledge or truth have a transcendental horizon.

¹ The Adoration of Heaven, 27 May 1877, Sermon XL, Parochial and Cathedral Sermons. Here he sums up the great tradition: We are made for God and our hearts are restless until they rest in God.

² The Mystery of the Trinity, the Revelation of Divine love 500

The Father represents the ultimate source and mystery that can never be fully comprehended but toward which all inquiry is directed. The Son represents the mediating principle through which the incomprehensible mystery becomes accessible to finite minds—every true insight participates in the Logos through whom all things were made. The Spirit represents the dynamic movement that draws the knower into ever-deeper communion with truth, beauty, and goodness.

Scientific knowledge apprehends the beauty and order of creation, historical knowledge recognizes the dramatic unfolding of human freedom, and theological knowledge contemplates revealed all participate in the same fundamental movement of adoration. The Father is the absolute source and ground of all being and knowing; the Son is the eternal Word through whom all things are intelligible; and the Spirit is the dynamic principle that enables the movement of mind toward truth. The physicist studying quantum mechanics, the historian examining medieval manuscripts, and the theologian contemplating the Incarnation are engaged in different but complementary forms of the same fundamental human activity: the mind's movement toward the infinite mystery that is God as Trinity. The Trinity is not merely the object of specifically Christian knowledge but the underlying condition that makes any knowledge possible.³

At the same time that we seek different kinds of truth, we struggle to make sense of our lives and ourselves, to find the knowledge we know we need to live in a very messy and very beautiful world. Today we are invited to begin again where we already started, to step into the inexhaustible exchange of divine love, the fountain of all knowing, to worship and adore.

³ Every act of knowing involves an implicit affirmation of being itself, which is God.