

27 THOUGHTS FROM THE HERMITAGE

THE HOLY TRINITY: TRINITY SUNDAY

(One God: three Persons—Father, Son, Holy Spirit)

The Holy Trinity is a mystery. People have at times tried to ‘describe the Trinity in drawing—usually grotesque or useless. Many years ago, long before my time in our monastery, a bright young monk went up to our Theology Professor (Fr. Michael Young) and chirpily said ‘Father, I think that I’ve solve the mystery of the Holy Trinity.’ Fr. Michael replied with acerbity, ‘Well, I’ve been wasting your time—you’re not going to waste mine’!

Mysteries are not to be explained but to be experienced. The Trinity is Love: this Love is for us to experience. We cannot explain the Trinity, but we can talk about God as One Trinity and Three Persons. God is proactive Love. Father loves the Son: Son loves the Father, and the fruit of this Love is the Holy Spirit, the Third of the Trinity existing from all eternity and the fruit of the Love of Father and Son. God is Love: God is infinite in all perfection. We worship the Beauty of God, the Glory of God and the Love with which He created everything and loves us each and all. Sometimes we consider Father as Creator, Son as Redeemer and Spirit as the Inspirer: but all three Persons are in all these works, creation, redemption and inspiration. (The Spirit hovers over the earth at the beginning of creation). At Jesus’ Baptism, we hear ‘This is my Son, the beloved’ and the Holy Spirit hovers as a dove. ‘This is the mutual pleasure that is at the heart of the Trinity. It is delight among equals which is the Holy Spirit. ‘Three in one is Joy’’ (Henry Williams ‘The Joy of God’ via Fr. Timothy Radcliffe O.P. In God we move and live and have our being.

It is the Trinity whom we acknowledged in all our prayers when we say, ‘Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.’ When we prayer with the sign of the Cross we pray ‘In the Father of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.’ At the end of St. Matthew’s Gospel, Jesus says: ‘Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them *in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*’. Our life is to be with the fulness of God in three members of the Trinity. Although we pray ‘Father’. ‘Son, Jesus’. ‘Holy Spirit’, it is good and wise to start and end all our actions with the Trinity: Our prayer at the start and end of each day should with the sign of the Cross: this can be true of our activities, e.g.. meals, journeys. If we start and end these activities with the sign of the Cross, then each activity becomes a prayer: by doing this at the start and end of each day, the whole day becomes a prayer.

‘Glory be to the father, and to The Son, and to the Holy Spirit, who live and reign for ever and ever. AMEN’ ‘The Grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ and the Love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. AMEN’

A small tribute to St. Boniface, whose Feast is this Friday. He is not well known in his native England—he is the apostle of Germany. An Englishman, he was born at Crediton, became a monk near Southampton. He was versed in Latin and produced the first Latin grammar in England. He became Abbot, and then was sent to the Mission in Germany where he became Bishop and then Archbishop of Mainz. In retirement he went to west Germany/ east Holland where he continued as a missionary. He was martyred by the Frisians in 754 (aged 79!) He is said to be the one who established the custom of celebrated a fir tree at Christmas.