

## Sunday Message from Fr William for the Twentieth Sunday of the Year 2023

*The 'Other World' continued*

We're looking at the life of the Trinity – Father, Son and Spirit – their life in the 'other world'. It is infinitely dynamic. The Son is 'sent by the Father'; the Son is 'going to the Father'. Twin dynamics, infinite, and ongoing. How are these twin dynamics an expression of infinite Freedom and infinite Love?

We see in this world examples of one becoming two, eg cell division; or on the cosmic level, star fission when one star splits into two. These natural phenomena in this world may be a reflection of the primary dynamic in the 'other world' – namely the Father 'expressing' himself. When we finite creatures express ourselves it's just words, or actions, or art. But when the Father expresses himself, the result is so complete that it constitutes a perfect image of himself. And because the Father is infinite, the image is infinite too. This is how the Bible invites us to understand the relationship between Father and Son. The Son is the 'image' of the Father (*Colossians 2:9*). The Son is the exact 'expression' of the Father's nature (*Hebrews 1:3*). Or as Jesus Christ himself puts it, 'To have seen me is to have seen the Father.' (*John 14:9*).

Here's another example from this world – the creation of a new human being. At the outset he is one with his mother. As an embryo there is an organic oneness between mother and child. Even in the early days of infancy he identifies with his mother on a subjective and psychological level. But as the days and weeks go by he becomes increasingly separate from his mother and increasingly independent as a new human being. This too may be a reflection in this world of the primary dynamic in the 'other world' – the Son coming from the Father.

But here's the difference, I mean between the Father and the Son. Yes on the one hand the Son is the 'image' of the Father, an 'exact expression' of his nature. On the other hand the Son is different from the Father, in fact infinitely different. How so? Because the Son comes from the Father, whereas the Father 'expresses' and 'sends' the Son. In this sense they are the exact opposites. And because each is infinite, Father and Son, this essential difference between them is also infinite. The Swiss theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar talks of the 'emptying of the Father's heart in the begetting of the Son' and writes that 'every world can only have its place within the difference between the Father and the Son'. (*Theodramatik III*)

It's like in this world: A child becomes increasingly separate from, and differentiated from his mother as the days and the weeks go by, increasingly established in his own autonomy, increasingly established in his own subjectivity, increasingly established in his own agency. All this is what it means to grow in personal freedom as a human being. This human freedom is but a finite reflection in this world of the Son's infinite Freedom in the 'other world' – his infinite coming forth from the Father.

How does this infinite Freedom lead on to infinite Love? And how do we as little finite human beings participate in this infinite Freedom and infinite Love?

*to be continued...*



Twentieth Sunday of the  
Year, 20 August 2023