

Sunday Message from Fr William for the Twenty-Third Sunday of the Year 2023

The 'Other World' continued

The life of the Trinity – Father, Son and Spirit – is without beginning and without end, a life of infinite Freedom and infinite Love, the Son going forth from the Father as 'gift', and the Son returning to the Father in a dynamic of total self-giving, a 'dance' held open and bridged over, in its infinite dynamism, by the Spirit.

Then this happens:

'Let us make man in our own image,
in the likeness of ourselves.' (*Genesis 1:26*)

Yes, from the 'other world' the Trinity creates this world, including human beings. But, it's only later that the full purpose and meaning of our existence is revealed: We are created not just to image the freedom and love of the Trinity in our own lives, but ultimately to participate in theirs. We were created to be taken up into the 'other world' and into their dance of infinite Freedom and Love. But how?

The New Testament speaks of a secret plan (*Ephesians 1:9*), a 'mystery hidden' throughout the ages (*Colossians 1:26*), which is now being revealed. The plan is this: not only to create this world, including us in their own image and likeness, but for the Son, the Second Person of the Trinity, to come from the 'other world' into this world, to become a human being, to become the man Jesus Christ, and to live among us.

But that is not all. The Son, the Second Person of the Trinity, has come into this world not just to be among us, but to unite us to himself, to join us to himself, in a way that we don't yet fully understand. We become, in the words of the New Testament, 'the Body of Christ'. It's an assertion repeated again and again throughout the letters of St Paul to leave us in no doubt that this is to be taken seriously and literally. Is it an analogy? If it is an analogy then I recommend that we take the Body of Christ to be the primary reality, because the Body of Christ is the original plan, the 'mystery hidden' throughout the ages; and that we take our own human bodies, which have evolved only relatively recently, as the secondary reality, as the analogy, an imperfect reflection of that primary reality, the Body of Christ.

So you see, our place in the 'dance', our place in the life of the Trinity is very much with the Son, and in him, as members of his Body. It's as members of his Body that we are swept up into their life, swept up into his going forth from the Father and returning to the Father in the 'other world'. It's as members of his Body that we share in his infinite Freedom. It's as members of his Body that we give ourselves, with him and in him, to the Father – a participation in his infinite self-giving, a participation in his infinite Love.

Whenever the Son speaks of 'life' this is the life he's talking about: not biological life, but the life of the Trinity, into which we are inserted, and in which we will participate.
to be continued...

William

Twenty-Third Sunday of the Year, 10 September 2023