

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

The 'Other World' continued

There are still many great questions to get onto in this adventure to discover what the 'other world' is like, to do with our place in it as human beings, and what it will be like for us as human beings:

- What happens to our bodily senses of sight, hearing, touch, smell, taste, since these have really evolved as mechanisms to interact with this world?
- What happens to our maleness and femaleness, since Jesus makes it clear that marriage is only for this world? (luke 20:35)
- Will our bodies be the same as they are in this world, or will they be changed?
- Will we in fact be bodies at all, or disembodied spirits?
- How will we apprehend/perceive/experience the vast reality of the 'other world' that lies beyond the powers of our bodily senses?
- And how will we participate as human beings in those infinite dynamics of Freedom and Love that are the twin dynamics of 'other world'?

But first a summary of the picture so far.

Core to the 'other world' is the life of the Father, the Son and the Spirit. In fact the 'other world' is nothing other than the life of the Father, the Son and the Spirit. The life of the Trinity is the 'other world', and vice versa. Our only way to participate in the 'other world' is to participate in the life of the Trinity.

'Eternal life' is another name for the life of the Trinity, not a realm beyond time and space in which the Trinity live, as I used to think. Jesus nearly always refers to it simply as 'the life'. The life of the Trinity is envisaged as an eternal going forth of the Son from the Father in infinite Freedom, and an eternal return to the Father in infinite, self-giving, Love. In this dance of Freedom and Love the difference between Father and Son, their polarity and utter complementarity is one which is both held open and bridged over the Spirit.

We can expect to see this 'other world', ie life of the Trinity, reflected in this one. On the microscopic level we see cell division and the coming together of those new cells. On the cosmic level we see star fission – the division of a star into two separate stars – and the mutual gravitational attraction of those two new stars. On the anthropological level we see it in the going forth of a child from his mother's womb into difference, separation, individuality and autonomy, and then coming together at a later point in a new kind of relationship that is at once still filial, but now also adult, mature, equal.

Above all the 'other world', the life of the Trinity, is projected into this world in the Christ Event: The Son sent forth from the Father into this world, then returning from this world to the Father. This is seen, witnessed, by human eyes, in the Incarnation, and in the Ascension. It is for our 'salvation'. But it is also, and at the same time 'revelation'. It is the 'other world', the life of the Trinity, revealed, made visible.

to be continued



Sunday 8 October 2023