

TRINITY SUNDAY 2026

In the 1980s in his pop career, he played the piano and keyboard in 'The Communards' and you will know him better as the Vicar who is on TV at every opportunity without doing any 'Vicaring'! He has a big smile and an even bigger dog-collar, and has been known to venture away from broadcasting to write some very disappointing mystery 'thrillers' like, 'Death at Evensong.' It must be The Revd. Richard Coles but that said, I feel sure, he is not a bad person! He can be entertaining and amusing. Speaking at a recent Hay Festival, wearing his priest's hat, he said this:

"She was at the end of her life, a lovely woman with a deep and very delicious faith. I went to see her and at one point she just looked towards the window and her face lit up. And she had this radiant smile and I thought, it's Jesus. She's seen Jesus. Then I looked over and it was the Red Arrows flying past."

What you may ask, has this to do with today's celebration? Well, it is about the same person wearing three different hats – in this case as a priest, broadcaster, and writer. Each different role is part of one and the same person and without any contradiction, any puzzlement, or any fears.

Instead, we need to look at today's Festival (which is the beginning of a new Season stretching through to

October) with a little more anticipation and confidence. Yes, you are right, there is no biblical reference as such to the formulaic word, 'Trinity', but as today's Gospel spells out, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the **name** (singular) of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

We make the sign of the cross as we gather to worship, as we receive the Sacraments, and again as we receive the final Blessing...we use physical, unspoken, almost unconscious signs which read, which say, 'yes, we are not just Jesus followers, we are not just monotheists any more than we are charismatics just focussing on one aspect of the fullness and mystery of God. Each part, each three parts, make up the unity which is the breadth, height and depth of God. This is the Trinity we can discover, inhabit, and learn to love, day by day.

No-one has said that it would be easy but when the penny drops, it is certainly a liberating and 'eureka' moment - like the thrill of seeing the Red Arrows whizzing overhead, seeing Spurs staying in the Premier League, seeing a new heating system or even a new toilet being installed inside St Mary's, for the first time in 600 years! Instead of worrying too much about the semantics of a Trinitarian faith, what was asked of those first disciples is the same for us: to go out, to proclaim, to live out, the wonders of God which are not

Unitarian so much as - multi-layered. We need to embrace, in other words, the inseparable union between Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Yes, I have heard preachers complain that this masculine language has to be replaced. I have heard the alternative, so-called non binary language promoted: 'In the name of The Creator, Sustainer and Sanctifier'ok, if that helps your relationship with our Triune God develop and grow, fine! To listen again to the prophet Isaiah, "The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not grow faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable."

We live in very prescriptive and unimaginative times (something Pope Leo's first encyclical warns us about in not checking on the corrosive powers of AI). We want to promote our particular causes or interests or prejudices, but the uncomplicated truth remains that God is not One but Three persons, and that mystery is also the source our faith's fulfilment and joy.

Last week at Pentecost I quoted a verse from George Herbert which was also a prayer. He achieved the same in the final verse of his poem 'Trinitie Sunday':

"Enrich my heart, mouth, hands in me,
With faith, with hope with charitie;

That I may runne, rise, rest with thee.”

There, in just three lines, we see three petitions, (nine in all) which draw us closer to the God who loves our relationships to unravel and grow in Him; who wills our world to be transformed by Him.

AMEN.