**Sermon June 4th 2023 Trinity Sunday-Jn. 15:-16:4 (p1083) & 2 Cor. 13: 11-14**

1. Intro. The Trinity provides a joke for Muslims, as they claim Christians are no good at Maths, if they think 3 units can become one! It’s a real stumbling block for them, as I found when talking to an Old Stoic, of my vintage, who, having married a Turkish wife, had become a Muslim. He said the Trinity was a “Byzantine construct”, implying it was made up! He was right that the Trinity was defined at the Council of Nicea in 325 in the Greek or Byzantine part of the Roman empire. He forgot, however, that the Lord Jesus Christ had spoken about it in Jn.15: 26. “When the Counsellor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth, who goes out from the Father, He will testify about Me.” This shows all Three Persons are inter connected.
2. The concept of the Trinity-3 Persons in one Godhead, is hard for our finite minds to grasp-we’re bounded by time & space, whereas God, by his very nature, must be infinite-not earth bound like we are. The best we can do is to get glimpses of the truth with pictures or analogies. There’s a ‘triangle’ with three sides, yet it is one figure. Or there’s ‘water’, which can become ice or steam vapour-the one fluid but three different forms. Both show that three things, that apparently differ, can share something in common. They convey some aspect of the Trinity, but they are rather static & leave out the dynamic element.-the energy or activity, as the Three Persons all work together ceaselessly. For instance, when Jesus was baptised by John in the Jordan, all three were involved Mk. 1: 10-11. “As Jesus was coming out of the water He saw heaven being torn open & the Spirit descend on Him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven ‘You are my Son whom I love; with you I am well pleased.’” So, as they work together, they are interdependent, which helps to rectify our understanding of a person as being totally independent-with an individual personality, will, actions & feelings. This understanding stresses the distinctiveness of the individual. That, in turn, stresses the diverse side of the Three Persons, though their extremely close relationship with each other must not be forgotten. For example, we can see God as Father, while the Son can be a brother, a friend as well as our Saviour & Master & He is these by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This brings us back to the unity of purpose that binds them together. We see this in the Creation.
3. The Creation of the world was an act of God the Father by the Holy Spirit “Now the earth was formless & empty & darkness was over the surface of the deep, & the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said “Let there be light & there was light.” Gen. 1: 2-3. In Col. 1: 6-7 we read “For by Him (Jesus Christ) all things were created: things in heaven & in earth, visible & invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by Him & for Him…& in Him all things are held together.” From the three Persons of the Trinity comes the energy to create, yet they are interdependent, while keeping the diversity of their Persons in their relationship-they work together united by a common purpose. This leads back in a circular fashion to their being interdependent.
4. How relevant is the input of the Trinity in the daily experience of the believer? Every time we pray the Grace we invoke the Trinity, as we saw in the second reading 2 Cor.13: 11-14. The context is Paul’s wish for reconciliation & a fellowship living in peace despite the factions, disputes & acrimony plaguing the church in Corinth. He wants ACTION: they should-aim for maturity in Christ, as they are transformed by Him

– be of one mind

– live in peace-hence the holy kiss. There is the promise “And the God of love & peace will be with you.” v 11, but his PRAYER for this to happen is:

 “The Grace of Christ”-meaning His unmerited gift to us of His transforming power & His presence, which comes as we accept him as Lord or the boss of our lives.

 “The love of God”-meaning His desire to redeem & rescue us from our rebellion against Him so that we can be with Him & experience His love filling our hearts.

 “The fellowship of the Holy Spirit”-meaning His power to unite us as part of God’s family, where each member is ready to help & be helped by each other.

 This prayer should help us to know, daily, the input of the Trinity not as some dry & arid formula but as a profound, rich & meaningful experience of the wondrous diversity yet unity of the Three Persons in one Godhead.