

**Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2020**  
**Trinity Sunday (A)**

**Liverpool Parish Church**

**[OT: Isaiah 40.12-17,27-end]**  
**[NT: 2 Corinthians 13.11-end]**  
**G: Matthew 28.16-20**

One of the issues that I hope the Government is currently grappling with is

What constitutes a family?

As the lockdown begins to ease, I can't imagine that too many people were anxious to go to the races or to buy a car but most of us want to be reunited with our family, especially if we live in separate households. Defining a household was easy, all those who live at one address. Defining a family is much trickier, especially when there is the urgent consideration for community safety.

I have three daughters, if I visit just one, will the others rightly want to visit too?

And if they see their mother, won't their partners want to visit their parents?

And their parents have other children and parents of their own and siblings who have children and maybe grandchildren. It is as though you throw a single pebble into the centre of a pond and the ripples go on repeating and repeating until they reach the very edge.

Or to put it another way in the words of John Donne

*No man is an island,*

*Entire of itself;*

*Every man is a piece of the continent,*

*A part of the main.*

Humanity is a family that is hard to define or restrict. At baptism, we remind the candidates that they have been brought by their immediate family to become members of the family of God in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. They join a family that ripples out across the centuries, across all time. They become united through God with all his creation in a way that our finite minds cannot comprehend.

Family is the essence of God. God is love and love cannot exist in isolation. There must be a source of love and object for that love to be bestowed on. The Trinity that we celebrate today is a single knot with the three strands of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A knot completely tangled up in love so that the three persons are truly one God, a divine entity that cannot be separated, a force and power of love that makes all things possible, that is almighty, all merciful and which bursts out to create a world and peoples because love can never have too many recipients of its bounty, the love of God can never be spent but goes on emptying and restoring itself into eternity.

We are made in the image and likeness of God, we are made from love and are charged with spreading the word of God's love as our ministry in this world. We are called to be kind, to be considerate of the needs of others, to be a source of hope to those we meet. We are members of the family of God. No man is an island.

We have seen this in the course of this week, in the international response to the death of George Floyd, in the open disgust that any white man can think it's ok to kneel on the neck of a black man causing him to die in pain and distress, in the appalling misguided belief that one life is less precious than another because it is encased in a different coloured skin.

To quote Donne again

*Any man's death diminishes me,*

*Because I am involved in mankind.*

We are rooted and grounded in the love of God which means that we cannot be pulled apart from his creation, no more than the Government can confidently define a family as 6 people, no more than the Trinity can be separated out into 3 distinct persons. What hurts you, hurts me, if I am seeking my own happiness, I would do well to search for it in fulfilling your happiness.

From the moment we were baptised, until the moment when we are returned to God in death and all that passes in between, it is all done in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. We are caught up in the knot of the love of the Holy Trinity and we would be fools to try and break free.

There is still no word about when churches can open again and we must be patient in order to protect each other from the risk of the virus. If we had been having our usual Eucharist at St Nick's today, the second reading would have been from Paul's second letter to the Corinthians. He ends with a prayer, familiar to many of us. I will end with that same prayer, knowing that even in isolation, we continue to be united as members of the family of God.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore. Amen.

The Revd Michelle Montrose