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| Sermon |
| Year C, Trinity Sunday 15th June 2025 |
| **Sermon…. The puzzle of the Trinity revealed in relationship, in which we are all invited.**  My husband and I have very different tastes when it comes to watching TV, he likes the reality TV genre and I prefer a bit of drama. But one program we do both quite like is the BBC series called Pilgrimage. And this week we stumbled across a series we hadn’t get watched from 2022, in which a group of celebrities set out on a pilgrimage from Northern Ireland to Iona in Scotland.  In the first episode, we watched how Scarlett Moffat (who is a bit of a reality celeb I understand); in exploring her faith, explained to the others that she liked the idea of there being a higher power looking out for you. A man in the clouds as it were, the sort that we might see represented in the film Evan Almighty.    And I was struck that, even in Christianity, we all have different ideas of who God is. Some associate most easily with God the father, like perhaps Scarlett, who envisages the image of Father Almighty, an old man sat in up heaven looking down on us and watching out for us. Others relate more easily to Jesus, God the Son, the personification of God who walked on the earth, someone who knows what it is to live and to suffer, giving himself up to death for humankind; others connect with the Holy Spirit, the experience of the spirit and its supernatural manifestations and gifts.  And I think it’s quite natural for us to have a leaning in one way or another, perhaps depending on our experience of life, or the way we came to faith; it might help when we pray to imagine talking to the person of God who looks a particular way.  But on Trinity Sunday we are reminded that it is shortsighted for us to imagine that our little human brains can possibly understand the full depth and breadth of God, especially with just one image. And indeed we shortchange ourselves if we do, for we could spend lifetime seeking to know more of God and still not know a fraction of all there is to know.  In the readings from today we get a glimpse of God’s Trinitarian nature. And I don’t know about you, but I can’t help but notice that there is an unmistakeable closeness and dynamicity of relationship between members of the Holy Trinity.  There is an unmistakable family likeness between the three, and with each seeking to reveal something, not of themselves but, rather of the other; the Father being revealed in the Son, (Romans 5.2) ‘Christ introducing us to God’s kindness’; the Holy Spirit speaking only what he hears from the Son (John 16.13).  And emerging from all three we hear of the divine wisdom of God, personified in proverbs, described as calling out to (and from) God’s creation. Revealing more and more of God to humankind.    We heard in the gospel reading that Jesus, as he prepared his disciples for his departure from this world, has already revealed something of the nature of God in his life and work in the world. (v12) ‘has so much more to say, more that they could now bear’.  And it reminded me of the line in the film ‘A Few Good Men’, with a very young Tom Cruise (playing Lt Daniel Kaffee) and Jack Nicholson (playing Col Nathan R Jessep). And they are in the courtroom and Lieutenant Kaffee is demanding the truth, and Colonel Jessep’s reply is ‘You can’t handle the truth’.  And it occurs to me that, from the very beginning, in Genesis, humankind has been demanding knowledge and truth – even trying to take it for themselves eating the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.  But indeed humankind couldn’t handle the truth, it brought us to a place of shame, disunity and ultimately death. So, Jesus tells his disciples that it is only with divine support and guidance that they have a chance of understanding.  And we discover that it is only in relationship with the God of the Trinity, that we can even begin to comprehend the ‘truth’, and indeed God’s purposes for his creation, and of course our lives.  Perhaps that’s why Trinity is such a challenge for preachers, as we feel obliged to some-how try and explain the Trinity, in a pithy, profound (but bitesize!) way. But we are reminded that, as we enter this season of ordinary time, going about our ordinary day to day lives, what we are called into in our faith as Christians is not a Sunday morning event, a single revelation from the preacher. Not as something for holidays and high days or something we are when times are tough.  Rather Christianity is an invitation into relationship with a dynamic community, with a God whose intention and purpose in creation was to dwell with us. It was, in that relationship, to reveal more and more of the mysteries of God’s self and the mysteries of God’s creation, so that we one day might receive the fullness of the Kingdom of God.  This quote from Roger Spiller puts it beautifully; ‘The Trinity is not a puzzle to solve, but a community to be drawn into. Not so much an article of belief as a way of life. It is the sublime demonstration of the full panoply of God's dynamic, communal life, reaching down and through and into every life that we too might share the wonders of his divine life’.  Notes: |