

# COMFORT in North Carrick

**Caring Observant Mindful Friendly Obliging Responsible Tactful**  
**Providing comfort to the people of North Carrick at a time of crisis**  
**Trinity Sunday 7th June 2020**

## TRINITY SUNDAY

This is Trinity Sunday. Today, the Christian Church acknowledges God as Father, as Son, and as Holy Spirit. We are not thinking about three different 'gods', but only one God who, as Hugh Montefiore says, 'reveals himself to us in three modes' - as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The word 'Trinity' is not found in Scripture. The Trinity is said to be implicit in certain Old Testament texts, and explicit in New Testament passages, such as the blessing in 2 Corinthians 13:14: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all." In the 4th century, the Trinity, as a way of understanding God, was absorbed into official Christianity; and today we speak of the one God, who is (at the same time) Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.



The Trinity is the foundation of much Christian worship. Many well-known hymns have a reference to the Trinity, while prayers often conclude with a Trinitarian doxology. Christian baptism is administered "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit"; blessings and benedictions follow a Trinitarian formula. When couples are joined together in marriage in Church, they are pronounced husband and wife - "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit". Christian worship is inherently Trinitarian, founded on the doctrine that there is one God, who expresses himself in a threefold way.

According to one observer, the Trinity suggests that "a committee of three is out to save the world". This is a humorous, and possibly a helpful thought!

At a more profound level, the Trinity means that, in this world, we can never have a complete and perfect understanding of God: his nature, his character, his personality. If we could (as many would wish), then God would no longer be God.

He would be a mere creature, shorn of his cosmic stature. The Trinity preserves the 'mystery' that is God. Our finite minds cannot grasp him in total. God is impossible to define in depth and detail. He remains a 'mystery' - and the Trinity preserves this 'mystery'. It is a good 'model' of how God works. It is not, however, a complete picture.

Last week saw the 80th anniversary of Operation Dynamo, the massive evacuation of allied forces from Dunkirk in 1940. Much has been said about the wartime Prime Minister, Sir Winston Churchill, and his part in that project. One of his biographers says that it is almost impossible to write a book about Churchill. He is so complex a character: a man of different tastes and moods; a man of various convictions and opinions; a man with so many sides to him, that a complete character picture is not possible. The best we can get is a partial portrait.

The same can be said of God. His ways are not our ways. His thoughts are not our thoughts. The Trinity allows us to understand God in a particular way - as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This is not the complete picture we would like. The Trinity preserves the 'mystery' of God, yet allows us to experience him in a threefold way.

That said, I still like Colin Morris's idea of the Trinity "as a committee of three to save the world!"

"Holy, holy, holy is God, our sovereign Lord,

who was, and is, and is to come!"

**Rev Gerald Jones**

On Sunday, we celebrate the Feast of the Holy Trinity.

With the charge of Jesus to go and make disciples of all people, we move into a time of growth in nature and for ourselves as the Church of God.

We are a people filled with the joy of knowing Jesus, the Word of God, set on fire with love for all peoples by His Holy Spirit, and surrounded with the uniting love of the Holy and Undivided Blessed Trinity.

As restrictions are slowly lifted and we begin to face the future so we ask ourselves what is our mission in this changed world.

We have faced these past months secure in God's love and filled with the hope of the resurrection, a hope that has sustained us through many difficult times in our lives.

As the world begins to emerge to a different future it is hope that we must share with them.

Pope Francis said: "To protect creation, to protect every man and every woman, to look upon them with tenderness and love, is to open up a horizon of hope; it is to let a shaft of light break through the heavy clouds; it is to bring the warmth of hope!"

As the people of God, we are called to share with all creation that which sustains us through the difficulties of life; as Christians we are not immune from suffering but we face suffering filled with the hope that God remains with us enfolding us in His love. It is this hope that allows us to find joy even in suffering.

The world, and our local community, need to be filled with hope for the future and it is our task to bring that hope and that joy to an uncertain future.

Our faith keeps us strong so that we can show the love and compassion of Christ to all in need.

Pope Francis also said "Holiness doesn't mean doing extraordinary things, but doing ordinary things with love and faith".

May the Holy Spirit fill us with courage as we seek to share the message of hope with compassion and love to all peoples.

**Fr Jim, St Oswald's**

### **A surprise in store**

Coronation Day in 1953 had been eagerly anticipated for months. Elaborate plans had been made. Crowds had flocked to London to be even a small part of what was to have been a great day. Many had bought the papers that morning to get the special souvenir editions. But there was a surprise in store.

The headlines were not about the Coronation, but rather proclaimed the other great news. Everest had been conquered. Hillary and Tenzing had become the first men to stand on top of the world. By a quirk of fate the news of their triumph on 29th May reached London on Coronation morning.

There had been many unsuccessful attempts to climb the world's highest peak. All the pre-war attempts had been from the Tibetan side as Nepal was a country closed to outsiders. Nepal finally opened its borders in 1950. It was from that side that the new expeditions began and it was from the Nepalese base camp that the successful attempt was launched. Since then, Everest has been climbed many times and from both sides. Despite the dangers, many have been drawn to pit their wits against the peak.



The high places have always held an attraction and in ancient times had a deep religious significance. That was where the human race could meet with the gods. In the Old Testament, it is at the foot of Mount Sinai that Moses has his encounter with God at the Burning Bush. Later, when he leads the Israelites out of Egypt he takes them back to Horeb, Mount Sinai, where they are to meet with God to become his people. There God makes his covenant with them and gives them His Law.

When Elijah flees for his life he takes refuge in a cave on Horeb. There he meets God, but this time God does not speak in thunder but through the still small voice

When we turn to the New Testament we find Jesus taking Peter, James and John up on to the Mount of Transfiguration where he is acknowledged by God. The disciples respond by seeking permission to build shelters so that they can stay there, but the whole point of the high places is that once up there the only way is down.

Moses brought the Law, Elijah went back to Israel and Jesus and the disciples came down to rejoin the others. We may go up to meet God, but we have to come down to go on with life. Often as a result of meeting God we find ourselves sent out in new directions.

We have come through the season of Easter and now as we come to Trinity Sunday we have to decide which direction we shall take now. We can go forward confident that God the Father has a purpose for us to fulfil; that God the Son is calling us to accept the Father's will; and God the Spirit will direct us on the right path to take.

As we begin to come out of lockdown the Church faces great challenges. One of the consequences of these last week's has been a spiritual reawakening. We have to be careful to respond positively so that we can help to advance the Church's mission as we all seek to rebuild the new 'normal'.

**Rev Dr John Lochrie**

### From Marguerite Hunter Blair

On Trinity Sunday we celebrate the Christian doctrine of the Holy Trinity, the three persons of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

God is more complicated than we first thought—the all-powerful Father, the vulnerable son Jesus and the empowering Holy Spirit that is witnessed at Pentecost. John 3:1-17. The followers of Jesus experienced this Holy Spirit of God—the wind or breath of God, which blows where it will and can't be tamed or controlled.



This breath of wind is filled with love. A love that can heal and a love that can nourish and inspire us all. We are all born vulnerable and we thrive on love and attachment to others.

As a community, we have all felt vulnerable in the wake of the COVID 19 pandemic. We have relied on the love and kind actions in our community to help us overcome our anxieties, loneliness and fear.

We are grateful to everyone who has worked to provide and deliver services to those who need support, confident and reassured that support is there for all of us when we need it.

Joan Chittister writes about the 'gift' of vulnerability and the strength it can bring. *"Vulnerability bonds us to one another, and makes us a community in league with life. Because we need one another, we live looking for good in others, without which we ourselves cannot survive, will not grow, cannot become what we ourselves have the potential to be."*

As Christians, we must always be aware of the impact of our actions and words on others, knowing what it feels like to be vulnerable and fearful.

We can never fully relate to what is going on in America and across the world with the 'Black Lives Matter' movement. However, we can as a community use our love and kindness to better understand and support every person who is affected by racism and discrimination.

*"Each person must live their life as a role model for others"* (Rosa Parks)

I would like to dedicate this prayer by St Teresa of Avila to our wonderful parishioner, friend, and role model – Nancy Flannigan – who is 90 on the 12th of June.

"Let nothing ever disturb you,  
Nothing affright you;  
All things are passing,  
God never changes.  
Patient endurance  
Attains to all things;  
Who God possesses  
In nothing is wanting:  
Alone God suffices."



### Enabling Rural Community Groups of Ayrshire

The three Ayrshire Councils were successful in receiving funding from Ayrshire LEADER to purchase and provide ICT equipment for constituted community groups in rural areas.

Are you a constituted group serving a rural area of Ayrshire? ✓

Would your community group benefit from ICT equipment? ✓

Does your group need to replace/update equipment to connect with your community? ✓



If the answer is YES, email [grants@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:grants@south-ayrshire.gov.uk) for a simple straight-forward application form.

Deadline for applications is 30 June 2020

### Grants for Community Groups

The Co-operative is offering grants of up to £5,000 for community groups in North Carrick. The closing date for applications is midnight on 28th June 2020.

Decisions on applications will be given in October and projects should take place or still be running after November 2021.

Details at: <https://causes.coop.co.uk/>

### A thought for today from Lynne at the Parish Church



"I don't know what it is about lockdown, but I have really rediscovered my love of Christian music. And just last week while watching a couple of the services of worship on the telly, they sang this song—'There is a Redeemer'. Very appropriate for Pentecost and for every day.

It took me right back to my teenage days in the Youth Fellowship in Glasgow, actually 2 or 3 Youth Fellowships. In those heady days, as a new 'born again' Christian, I just couldn't get enough of Church. Sunday was a round of services and meetings from 10am—till 10pm. And it was great!

Before lockdown, like many, I used to worry that there weren't as many youngsters in Church, now in some ways, I'm grateful—young or New Christians (of any age) need to be Spiritually fed. Are we able to do that when we are isolated and separated as we are?

The answer of course, is that this is the work of the Holy Spirit and as God's Power on earth, from Pentecost till this present time, He is doing the work of our heavenly Father in us and in His people everywhere.

Meanwhile back to the song I started with, (There is a Redeemer) I have an odd way of singing it. (Folks in the Parish Church choir will tell you my singing is always a bit odd). But here in the chorus,

"Thank you oh my Father for giving us your Son and leaving your Spirit 'til the work on earth is done."

I find myself singing—"Thank you oh my Father, **forgiving** us your Son and leaving **us** your Spirit 'til the work on earth is done."

Its just a small difference, but for me it highlights the central, core belief of my faith. **God forgives us.**

He forgives us, when we go astray and do not follow His ways, He forgives us, that His own son had to be the one to pay for our sins.

He wants and waits to welcome us home.

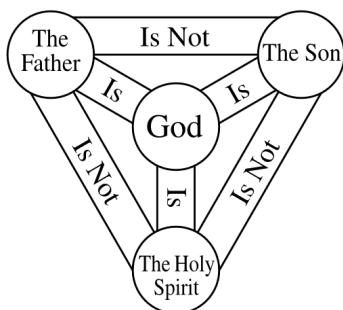
As we 'wait' to get back to our church buildings I find it comforting to know that by the Spirit the work and being of the Church goes on.

**God Bless, Lynne**



The Feast of the Most Holy Trinity follows very fittingly after Pentecost. We have celebrated Christ in the Easter season, the Spirit at Pentecost and now we turn to the great mystery of the Trinity.

Sometimes St. Patrick's analogy of the shamrock is used to give us an inkling of the mystery of the Trinity. I prefer the comparison with water—it exists as a solid in ice, as a liquid and as a vapour in steam. Yet these three very different aspects are one and the same element.



The Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, exists in perfect harmony, three persons in one God. This indicates the importance of harmony in our own family and community relationships.

As Church, we live in a parish community which, to operate at its optimum level, requires united co-operation between pastor and members, particularly those serving in any way within the parish.

As united and loving communities, Christians can offer prayer, hope and service as part and parcel of the Good News they are meant to witness.

In today's lockdown, the Church and its communities worldwide are finding new ways and opportunities to work together to maintain harmony and to look ahead to a better future.

If the voice of God is to be heard and heeded in our world today, the pandemic may be an unrivalled opportunity, to let him speak through our unity and working together as one.

**Ellen Hawkes**