



The Benefice of
Harden, Wilsden, Cullingworth, Denholme
Sunday 30 May 2021
Trinity Sunday



Preparation

We meet in the name of God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts:
the whole earth is full of his glory.

Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength;
ascribe to the Lord the honour due to his name.
The whole earth is full of his glory.

The Lord shall give strength to his people;
the Lord shall give his people the blessing of peace.

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts:
the whole earth is full of his glory.

Responsory

Prayers of Penitence

‘How often have I longed to gather your children,
as a hen gathers her brood under her wings,’ says the Lord,
‘but you would not come to me.’
Let us as wayward children return to God
and confess our sins.

Father, you come to meet us when we return to you:
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Jesus, you died on the cross for our sins:
Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

Spirit, you give us life and peace:
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

**Loving God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
we bring to you those times
when we have not loved the world as you do:
when we have been careless
in our protection of the environment,
lazy in our faith and unkind in our relationships.
Bring us from a place of darkness to a place of light
that we might be reborn in hope and joy and commitment.
We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.**

Absolution

May the Father forgive us
by the death of his Son
and strengthen us
to live in the power of the Spirit
all our days.
Amen.

The Collect

Holy God,
faithful and unchanging:
enlarge our minds with the knowledge of your truth,
and draw us more deeply into the mystery of your love,
that we may truly worship you,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

THE WORD OF GOD

First Reading: Romans 8: 12-17

So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh— for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

Thanks be to God for the gift of his word

Gospel reading: John 3: 1-17

Alleluia, alleluia.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
one God, who was, and who is, and who is to come, the Almighty.

Alleluia.

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.” Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?” Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” Jesus answered him, “Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?”

“Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Thanks be to God for the gift of his Holy Word

Reflection by Richard

There are lots of things that I like to eat, but I do very much like a Jaffa Cake!



Jaffa cakes are a perfect combination in my way of thinking. There is the base with its soft texture, but a firmness that holds the whole thing together. I love the sponginess of it. And of course there is the chocolate topping. When is chocolate not a good component? I enjoy the way that it splits and cracks around the edges where you bite in. And then there is the orange filling, zingy and zesty, giving it the flavour, sweet and tangy! Absolutely perfect!!

And of course there is the great controversy: Is it a cake or is it a biscuit?

The big significance of the discussion is whether it should be taxed more as a cake or less as a biscuit. On the box they call it a cake, but you always find it among the biscuits!

I gather that a cake is recognised by the fact that it is soft, but as it ages it goes hard ... like a Jaffa Cake, but a biscuit starts hard and then over time goes soft. Clearly by this definition, the Jaffa Cake is clearly a cake. And of course biscuit means “baked twice” which all biscuits are and Jaffa Cakes are not, so it can only be a cake and not a biscuit.

And yet I can dunk it happily in my coffee, so it must be a biscuit, I’d never do that with a piece of chocolate cake. And I can easily eat ten of them in a row, which is only possible with biscuits and not cakes. It must be a biscuit.

It is all a bit of a mystery!

Which makes Jaffa Cakes the perfect food for Trinity Sunday!

The base reminds me of the Father. This is the foundation, the substance. This is also the great focus of the mystery, difficult to pin down and define. The chocolate makes me think of the Son, visible and defined, the way to the Father. There is a sweetness and a palatability in that chocolate and when you taste the Son you get through to taste the goodness of the Father too. And the Orange Filling can only be the Holy Spirit. Full of zest and zing, bringing the whole thing to life and uniting the Father and Son.

It is a lovely way to see the Trinity and a very tasty illustration.

But by far my favourite thing about it, is that I have no idea how a Jaffa Cake works, and I don’t really have any great interest in even whether it is a cake or a biscuit. All I know is that someone once gave me a Jaffa Cake and I know that they taste really good. So each time I have one, I really enjoy it!

And that for me is the most important thing about the Trinity. God has revealed himself over time as the Father. the Son and the Holy Spirit. It seems an amazing and a wonderful combination. And we really don’t need to understand it, what is truly important is that we enjoy it and rejoice in it ... just like I do with Jaffa Cakes.

So let us today praise our God, who has shown his presence as Father, Son and Holy Spirit! Let us rejoice in God and enjoy God!

Affirmation of Faith

Do you believe and trust in God the Father?

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

Do you believe and trust in his Son Jesus Christ?

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

Do you believe and trust in the Holy Spirit?

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession led by Judith Drake

Let us pray to the Father, through the Son, and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Lord God, may the Church reflect your community and unity; may there be Godly harmony, shared ministry, mutual support and encouragement in the faith. We pray that the Church may be alive to God's beckoning, quick to obey his will and always ready to act in his loving service.
You are our God and in you we put our trust.

We pray for all those in government as we continue to face times of uncertainty, although we are gradually seeing the opening of activities, shops and business, the pandemic is not yet over. May those in power act wisely and with insight and understanding for the well-being of all.

You are our God and in you we put our trust.

We pray for your world in need, where poverty, conflict, political chaos, and destruction of the earth are overwhelming; we pray for those fleeing from conflict, refugees without a permanent home, the homeless and the hungry. We pray for those who live in unsafe and vulnerable situations. Those who are suffering through deliberate cruelty in the hands of others. We give thanks for those who work to provide for those in need, offering care and support. Bring compassion to our lives; teach us to fight injustice in order to bring about a better world.

You are our God and in you we put our trust.

God of compassion and love, through your Holy Spirit you gave the disciples power to heal the sick. Give comfort to those who are ill, and those burdened by fear and anxiety. Bless and uphold those who care for and support loved ones either at home or in hospital. In a moment of quietness, we bring before you those for whom we have special concerns

You are our God and in you we put our trust.

Lord of the living and the dead, bring everlasting peace in your arms for those who have come to the end of their life on earth. In our prayers today we give thanks for the life of Mavis and her gifts to the Church and beyond. We pray for those who grieve loved ones, especially thinking of Gordon and Kate, and ask that you bring comfort and peace, and let them know there is light and hope after darkness.

You are our God and in you we put our trust.

We give you thanks and praise for your endless love and patience. Whenever we turn away, please turn us back to you.

Merciful Father,

**Accept these prayers for the sake of your Son,
Our Saviour Jesus Christ, Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

CONCLUSION

Closing Prayer

To God the Father; who loved us,
and made us accepted in the Beloved:
to God the Son, who loved us,
and loosed us from sin by his own blood:
to God the Holy Spirit,
who spreads the love of God abroad in our hearts:
to the one true God be all love and all glory
for time and for eternity. **Amen.**

O God our mystery,
you bring us to life,
call us to freedom,
and move between us with love.
May we so participate
in your dance of trinity
that our lives may resonate with you,
now and forever. **Amen.**

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you. **Amen.**
The Lord make his face shine upon you,
And be gracious to you. **Amen.**
The Lord lift up his countenance upon you
And give you peace. **Amen.**

The Lord God almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
The holy and undivided Trinity,
Guard you, save you,
And bring you to that heavenly city,
Where he lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Sending Out

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.