

Dear Friends,

On the Tuesday 2nd June is the anniversary of the Coronation of Her Majesty the Queen. During the past few weeks the British nation has been embarrassed by the dishonourable behaviour of a few leading members of Parliament. But we can and should thank God that we have a Monarchy and especially the Queen who we can genuinely honour and proudly acclaim as our Sovereign. May God continue to bless her and her family, and may she long reign over us.

Sunday 7th is the glorious Feast of the one true God, the Most Holy and undivided Trinity. During the month of May we have been celebrating the Resurrection of Our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ, His Ascension and coming of God the Holy Spirit at Whitsun to establish Christ's mystical Body in the world, the one, holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. In the out pouring of the Holy Spirit or Ghost on the Day of Pentecost, God revealed as never before His very being that He is One God in three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

This revelation of the one true God in Trinity, incomprehensible to the fallen sinful human mind is the one true concept of the Deity that makes sense. Christians accept the truth of God's self-revelation as the One God in Three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and call Him The Holy Trinity. It is only by accepting, with humility, the Trinitarian Revelation of the Godhead that one can begin to understand the true purpose of the Universe and of created life. The Trinitarian Revelation is the showing that at the very heart or centre of ultimate reality is Eternal Love.

God is love and He is changeless, therefore there must have been, from all eternity, something within the Godhead which is of the being of unchangeable love. This wonderful revelation and mystery of the Most Holy and undivided Trinity, how God the Father, from all eternity loves God the Word, the Son, by whom all things were made, in the love and power of God the Holy Spirit or Ghost, reveals that the very being of the Oneness of the Deity, is that He is within Himself Love.

The great Anglican Priest and Tractarian Leader, Dr. Edward Pusey (1800-82), wrote: 'The love of God is the fountain, the love of man is the stream in which it flows. Both are parts of one whole, threads of one cord, so intertwined that thou canst not have the one without the other, links of one chain which binds us to Almighty God, descending from Him to us, and lifting us up to His very Being, which is Love.'

Yet all manifestations of human love are but a pale reflection of the love of God, within Himself and for us. The origin of true human love is from God, indeed, all true love flows from Him. Dr. Pusey also wrote: 'Not only is love of our neighbour the test of our love of God, it increases it.' Sadly, however, what we often call love is not love but the manifestation of attraction motivated by selfish lust and is temporary.

Our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ taught us that the true meaning of love, is a sacrificial out pouring for the good of the other. What He taught cannot be separated from Who He is and how He lived out His earthly life as God-in-the flesh. His teachings are not those of a holy prophet but the unchangeable truths of God Himself which, without exception, are applicable to every human being. If we are to be what He created us to be, then we must be people overflowing with true love for God, our fellowmen and His creation.

Every honest person will surely admit that it is not easy to love as we ought especially those we find difficult to like or who have hurt us in any way. God knows that and in His infinite love and mercy offers to help all who turn to Him. 'Come unto Me and ask .. and I will ..'. Because of His gift of free will He will never force anyone to obey Him but through the example of Jesus Christ, His eternal Word and Son, encourages all to follow Him. He stands, as it were, at the door of the heart and knocks and hopes to be invited in.

The Reverend Clifford Taylor, our priest on the Isle of Wight died on Saturday 23rd May at Solent Grange Nursing Home. His funeral service at All Saints Church, Ryde will take place on Friday 5th June at 12 noon. This will be followed by a private committal at the crematorium. Family flowers only but donations could be made to Cancer Research UK, Macmillan Nurses or Marie Curie Nurses. Fr. Clifford was Chaplain to the National Service (RAF) Association, and the REME Association - Mid Anglia Branch We offer to his wife Jean and their family our deepest sympathy at their sad loss. May he rest in peace.

Your Priest & Friend,

Fr. Brian.

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Some background to the understanding of Whitsun (by Henry Barclay Swete 1835-1917, Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge)

It was firmly held that the mission of the Holy Spirit to the Church was but a continuance of His sanctifying work in pre-Christian times, although both the sphere and the manner of His working were new. The Mission of the Paraclete was not a new departure in the dealings of God with men, but a great extension of the work which had been going forward in the earliest ages of the world, and more especially in the life of Israel. There were saints before Christ, and no saint was ever without the sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit. The gift of Pentecost was not a new gift, but it was given in new abundance, through new channels, and with new and glorious results.

... It is He who sanctifies and seals the soul in Baptism; who makes the bread and cup of the Eucharist to be to the faithful the Body and Blood of Christ; who endues the ministers of the Church with the grace of orders; who through their acts and words blesses and absolves. The Sacramental teaching of the ancient Church loses the appearance of exaggeration which attaches to it in the judgement of many modern believers, when it is viewed in the light of the ancient doctrine of the Person and work of the Holy Spirit. Men who held that the Creator Spirit, who is the living energy of God, dwells in the Holy Catholic Church and is operative in her ministerial acts, could not find words adequate to express their sense of the greatness of His work in the Sacraments. To magnify the Sacraments was to magnify the Divine Spirit, who lived and wrought in the Body of Christ.