



TRINITY NEWSLETTER JUNE 2011

And baptize them in the NAME of...

INTRODUCTION

I would have loved to reflect a little more on Pentecost and the precious gift of the Holy Spirit. Hope you did so during the ten days from Ascension to Pentecost.


Alas, we are moving on in the Church Year and Trinity Sunday is knocking on the door. It is time to bring the Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier into One. I hope this will bring you special comfort in knowing **Who** is at our disposal so graciously.

Blessed is the one who reads this letter.

1. THE TRINITY? WHAT IS IT REALLY?

The concept of the Trinity has baffled people and is still doing so. Many consider it nonsense, for how can three persons be one and one Deity be single, whilst operating in three forms? Well it baffles me too, but then we are talking about GOD and how can I, a piece of dust, comprehend and unpack my God and Creator.

The 'Trinity' is not a what, but a Who? The concept "Trinity" tries to explain how we are to comprehend God? Without going into too much theological jargon, we only know about God through His self-revelation in forms we classify as 'persons'. God revealed



Himself as our Creator and Sustainer in the creation of the world. To the fallen creation, He incarnates Himself to become Jesus, our Saviour who died on Calvary for us. Not willing to leave us as orphans with His ascension, God the Holy Spirit is sent to be our Comforter and Guide, as well as the agent to build the Church, the communion of believers.

Why do we make life so difficult for us by trying to make all these into ONE deity? Because our revelation (the Bible) stated in the words of Jesus, for example, at various instances that they are one and that these “persons” are equal to God. The great Commission (Matt 28) link the three and benedictions are encompassing the three (2 Cor.13:14) Compare also the baptism of Jesus (Matt.3:16ff)

The last word has not been said, this is not even a mere introduction, but then we have the rest of the Church year to reflect on this.

Somehow the following prayer can be linked to the Trinity quest:


A prayer of St Anselm

Lord Jesus Christ; Let me seek you by desiring you,
and let me desire you by seeking you;
let me find you by loving you,
and love you in finding you.

I confess, Lord, with thanksgiving,
that you have made me in your image,
so that I can remember you, think of you, and love you.

But that image is so worn and blotted out by faults,
and darkened by the smoke of sin,
that it cannot do that for which it was made,
unless you renew and refashion it.

Lord, I am not trying to make my way to your height,
for my understanding is in no way equal to that,



but I do desire to understand a little of your truth
which my heart already believes and loves.

I do not seek to understand so that I can believe,
but I believe so that I may understand;
and what is more,
I believe that unless I do believe, I shall not understand.

Source: *The Oxford Book of Prayer*, George Appleton (gen. ed.), 1985, 2002.

2. TRINITY SUNDAYS DEDICATED TO UPLIFTING FAMILY VALUES


Those of you who are privileged to receive Diocesan Council minutes (and you can freely ask your pastor and reps to share this with you) will know that a resolution was taken to really give attention to the family during the forthcoming Trinity Sundays. These Sundays are void of festivals and thus very suitable to teach and grow congregations.

How can we uplift the families and instill positive values. Without taking into consideration the different types of families present in modern society, I would like to make the following suggestions: It can be very beneficial if individuals or groups can reflect on the dynamics within families and give guidance to how they have tried to conquer their own difficulties. This can involve quiet time (family prayers), communication, family meetings, sharing of tasks, addiction, pocket money, peer pressure, conflict resolution, stress, etc., etc., you decide.

I would like to urge congregations to draw up a list linked with the preaching list and allow different leagues to reflect on this issue and share with the congregation (10 minutes or so).

Experts in the field, e.g. social workers can also be invited to give a few tips to build healthy families.

A wealth of information is available in the Bible, books, magazines, newspapers. Urge your congregants to open their eyes and share this info. A special bulletin board (nothing



fancy and expensive) would be a smart investment with dividends and fruit you will never comprehend.

Please share with us, so that your wisdom can reach others too.

3. VIVA PARTNERSHIP! (Take 2)


Allow me to reminiscent (a little) on the last 14 days in Celle, the Circuit partner of the Free State Circuit (courtesy of the Celle generosity).

The core highlight of our visit was the 34th German Evangelical Kirchentag (Protestant) in Dresden, former East Germany. It was indeed something special to see how a city can become a church stage. Everywhere groups and individuals play, display, talk, perform something of Christianity and beyond around the theme: *Where your heart is there you treasure will be too* (Matt.6:21). The closing service attended by more than hundred thousand people, a brass band of six thousand members, must just be experienced to comprehend.

We visited Hermannsburg (birthplace of the Hermannsburg Mission under Louis Harms) not a city but a small town, but with a big heart for mission and indeed the mustard seed has become a tree and is still growing! Shows us indeed again: do not wait till all the resources are available to start, start and the resources will become available (through the help of God).

A difficult visit was to Bergen- Belsen some 30 kms from Celle where amongst others Russian prisoners of war and Jews were kept in exchange camps for monetary exchanges. When this was not possible thousands were starved to death or die of cold and diseases.

I had to question myself as to when do compassion stop and selfish survival instincts take over for *me* to get food and a drop of water, clothing, a bunk to sleep on, etc. What does it take to forsake your relatives/neighbors and just look straight ahead as they die next to you? On a different level, how can the conscience of people be controlled not to care anymore? I sincerely hope we start to learn from these concentration camps.



In conclusion (for now) let us consider the words of Sir Isaac Newton who stated that we are building so many walls, but so few bridges!

4. WORDS OF COMFORT

May the Lord within your darkest night kindle a fire for u when you call out: But I trust in you, O Lord; I say? “You are my God.” My times are in your hands...(Ps 31: 14, 15.)

5. WAITING ON GOD.....

Please pray to God that Pentecost becomes a reality in all our hearts and lives. That instead of being useless to Christ due to sin, selfishness and fear, we may be equipped to partake in the establishment of the kingdom here on earth, each one playing his/her part as the Spirit endowed.

Come Holy Spirit move me now...

6. HAVE YOUR SAY....

Write to the Diocesan Executive Secretary, Rev Manong (mjmanong@yahoo.com) or the editor (newtonbrandt@gmail.com) to complain, disagree, add, and stimulate debate around issues in this letter –or whateva is on your heart.