

Trinity Sunday

One of the most fundamental realities that Jesus came to reveal to mankind is the paternity of God. On a human level psychologists have laid stress on the essential bond of children to their natural father. But does the same apply to our Heavenly Father.

I think it was Freud, nearly a century ago who said that our filial dependence on God experienced through religion is a kind of pathological regression into childhood dependency. God, instead of being a loving father, forces men and women into a kind of slavish dependency, he said. Nietzsche saw this as the tragedy of man. If man is to attain adulthood, it necessarily means the death of God. Some people even go so far as to say that the progress of civilization calls for the death of God. God has to die so that man can be born. This sort of twisted thinking partly fuelled the fires of the last war, with disastrous consequences, of course.

But has man really become more fulfilled as a result of choosing the death of God over faith. On the contrary man has lost his soul; 'the world has grown cold', Pope Benedict said. "When the father is gone the children are cold". When God disappears people look for other sources of warmth. We try again to reconnect with nature. People often seek refuge in ecological issues. We become slaves to Twitter and Facebook and social network sites. The absence of our common Father in Heaven is betrayed by a frantic search for fraternity and cohesiveness among His orphaned children.

Since God disappeared we have never witnessed such a search for communication and social engineering. But it doesn't do the trick or bring us any closer to one another. Witness the anger and wanton damage to property in America in the wake of George Floyd's death or the havoc caused recently in

Palestine. Has this anything to do with the obliteration of the God as a universal Father of all. Is universal brotherhood possible in the absence of a common Father in Heaven?

The recovered sense of our divine son-ship and daughter-ship is what's called for. The Father loves us gratuitously and with total acceptance. Our era is characterised by a tremendous lack of acceptance. Modern man prides himself on being tolerant. But tolerance can fall way short of acceptance. Cowardice can mask itself as tolerance. If we merely put up with people it hardly compares with loving and accepting them as persons, made in the image of God? To be accepted and to accept the other, despite ours and their failings - is that not the most important form of therapy for our era. In a world that suffers so much from lack of acceptance, reconciliation, and love, the Christian faith can be profoundly therapeutic. Even when we go away from the Father he still loves us as His children.

In the one prayer which Jesus gave us, He refers to God, not just as His Father but our Father. Before he ascended into Heaven, Jesus said to his apostles: I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God. These words are also addressed to us and if we believe and live by them, in the world to come, we become wedded to the life of the Trinity forever.