

convinced! ~ Have you ever seen footage of the first time a young eagle takes flight ~ is pushed out of the nest ~ its comfort zone and has to trust and rely on instinct ~ it doesn't know it can fly but discovers it can! We do that with faith when the Spirit works in us!

How are we supposed to use what we discover we can do?

Matthew tells us ~ can you remember what our Gospel commands us to do this morning?

We have a task because Jesus is our authority and we act in His name ~ and He tells us that we must go and make new disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (that is the Trinity that we celebrate this morning); teaching them to obey Jesus' commands and knowing that He will never leave us! Sharing what we have and not being defensive about it ~ letting others find their wings of faith just as we have and are doing!

And finally what does Paul tell us that our response should be to finding our wings, trusting the Spirit of God in our lives and honouring all that Jesus asks of us?

Paul says be happy about it ~ rejoice ~ make sure that everyone has the opportunity to hear about and accept God's love for them. Encourage each other to share experiences and understanding of faith and value that by living in peace and know that God is always with you.

Lets make that our prayer of thanksgiving this morning using the words as we are given them ~

So we pray ~

"Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice!
Strive for full restoration,
encourage one another,
be of one mind, live in peace.
And the God of love and peace will be with you."

Amen

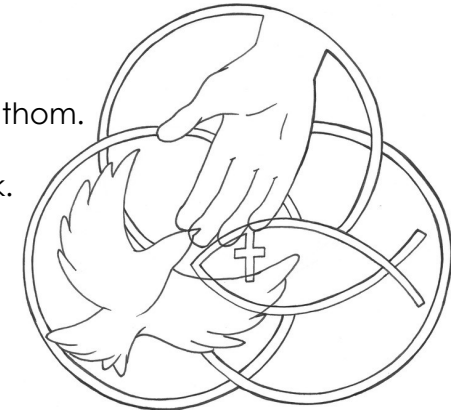
Ministry Musings (11th June 2017)

Trinity Sunday

Isaiah, having described the awesomeness of God the creator and our relative insignificance in the scheme of things then gives us these words of promise and affirmation (Is. 40: 28ff)

"Do you not know? Have you not heard?"

The LORD is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He will not grow tired or weary,
and his understanding no one can fathom.
He gives strength to the weary
and increases the power of the weak.
Even youths grow tired and weary,
and young men stumble and fall;
but those who hope in the LORD
will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint."



It is this God that Paul writes of as he encourages his readers as he signs off his letter to the church in Corinth (2Cor. 13:11)

"Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you."

And Matthews gospel, in the version we know, closes with the Great Commission ~ how you and I as Christians are to be because of the work of the Father through Jesus and the Holy Spirit within us ~ (Matt. 28: 18ff)

"Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Be reassured we have Immanuel ~ God with us in our pilgrimage

Knowing Jesus ~ making Him known



Isaiah 40: 12-17, 27-end
OT page 678
2 Corinthians 13: 11 -end
NT page 183
Matthew 28: 16-20
NT page 32

Reflect for a moment ~ if someone asks you about your faith ~ what thoughts whizz through your brain as you either panic or open your mouth and say something?

How do you know about God?

Where do you get your information?

who has told you ? Have you checked the details?

What have you understood? What do you believe?

So what do you know about God?

Lets start with a reassurance ~ Matthew (10:19), Luke (12:11) and Mark (13:11) all tell us not to worry about what we will say. We will be given the right words when we are challenged or interrogated about our faith!

That's what it feels like most times ~ we get asked about our faith in situations where people might genuinely be searching and wanting to know; but because it is special and important to us we feel defensive and want to protect it ~ so we clam up and don't want to risk sharing in case it what we offer is rejected or we are ridiculed ~ worse ~ in case it is rubbish and we are laughed at ~ left feeling damaged!

Do we behave in the same way about other things that are important to us? Probably not ~ not unless we feel examined and exposed! We share views on everything else ~ often whether we know anything about those things or not ~ so

what is it about our faith ~ our relationship with God that makes us behave differently?

It isn't just us today ~ our parents and grandparents had the same experiences and probably didn't speak about them. Our church probably hasn't helped ~ talked at us not with us and put expectations on how we should be! We will all have known a family member or a friends relative who could speak freely and enthusiastically about God's love for them! Have you ever stopped to think why? Got beyond the silent admiration for them? Stopped to think and ask God ~ why can't I do that? They don't seem to worry about what they have to say ~ so why do I?

When we get beyond that feeling of panic and call on the Spirit to provide the words ~ when we believe what our scripture tells us we discover that we do know and can share quite a lot! We may not be able to name chapter and verse ~ but we know roughly what is said and the more we have confidence in sharing what we know the more natural it becomes.

Take today's readings: if you leave church and a friend or family member asks what bit of the Bible did you hear in church ~ what did it say ~ could you tell them. Well let's find out ~ turn to the person nearest to you ~ and share one thing, however small that you remember! Don't panic you don't have to recite the words but share the essence of what you heard ~ Start with Isaiah ~

What did Isaiah talk about ? ~

He spoke of the enormity and magnitude of God and how we are such a small part of His Creation and can feel insignificant BUT he asks us "Have you not known, Have you not heard ~ that the Lord is everlasting", creates all things and treasures all that He creates. We will run out of steam but God doesn't and God will renew us, empower and enable us? We will rise up like eagles ~ graceful, carried by the air thermals, we will not get weary or waste energy or get faint. We will be equipped even when we do not feel