Trinity Sunday, St Saviour’s Church, Arklow June 7th 2020

Sermon on The Penitential Kyries for Trinity Sunday

Words like *The Penitential Kyries* probably sound a very unpromising place to start a sermon on Trinity Sunday. The sun may well streaming in through the windows and beckoning us into the garden for warm and positive relaxation. *The Kyries* are our ways, in a liturgical context, of inviting God to have mercy on us; we call on God for mercy in our worship for our lives. They do this by moving from The Father to The Son to The Spirit in calling for the mercy of God, The God who is Three in One and One in Three. Each Season takes a special emphasis for the Three Persons of The Trinity to highlight the theme that runs through the celebration of the day and to illustrate the versatility and the vitality that are the nature, the essence of such an extraordinary and such a responsive God. It is particularly interesting on Trinity Sunday when we mark and celebrate the Trinity of Three Persons in One God to see what themes come to the fore. The Trinity is the basis of our faith as expressed in Creed and Doctrine. It is the voice we give to our belief. It would, therefore, seem worthwhile to get some idea of what The Kyries for Trinity Sunday seek to teach us about this God whose love and power we worship.

Many people throughout history have found it difficult to describe or to explain The Trinity. St Patrick, we are told from early childhood, used the shamrock to describe to the Irish people what it might be like for three distinct entities to have a common root and a shared energy. He used an everyday weed to do this. It is an illustration. At least the story has stood the test of time. The image and the colour of the shamrock are iconic of Irishness internationally. But this is not my point. Rather, I want to explore very briefly what *The Penitential Kyries* for Trinity Sunday tell us about God. God is my point.

First let us hear them:

Father, you come to meet us when we return to you …

Jesus, you died on the cross for our sins …

Holy Spirit, you give us life and peace …

Now let us home in on them and see if we can work out what they are saying and why they are saying this on Trinity Sunday. What they say about The Father comes directly from The Story of the Prodigal Son: when the lad were far off, the father came running to meet the returning son; the forgiveness is in the embrace not in the arguing. What they say about The Son comes directly from the preaching of Peter in the early chapter of Acts, of which we were reminded on The Feast of Pentecost: the death of Jesus on the cross for our sins is a moment to savour and to stand in; the gift of God in the Son is the gift of the self of God to the world, not only to those who go from time to time to church. What they say about The Holy Spirit connects us directly with the whole of creation: nature and politics together; society and church; life with all of its capacity to give life; peace with all of its capacity to make peace; life and peace together with all their capacity to offer redemption and reconciliation by which I mean: belonging and togetherness in a cosmos of dignity and respect, trust and care. The Trinity speaks directly to COVID 19.

This is The Trinity who is: *equal in majesty, undivided in splendour* whom we worship.