

Trinity Sunday

One of the most fundamental realities that Jesus came to reveal to mankind is the Fatherhood 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, the philosopher, 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 terrible consequences.

But has man really become more fulfilled as a result of choosing the demise of God over faith. Pope Benedict said 'man has lost his soul; 'the world has grown cold'. 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 can seek refuge in ecological issues. We become slaves to Twitter and Facebook and social network sites. The absence of belief in 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 a whole lot closer to one another. For instance from social media everyone in the world knows what's happening in Gaza, but many are in denial and don't want to know. 'Has the world lost its humanity the U.N. asks? Has this

anything to do with the obliteration of the God as a universal Father of all. Is universal fraternity on earth possible when people no longer believe in their Father in Heaven?

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, our Father? To be accepted and to accept the other, despite 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, the Christian faith can be profoundly therapeutic. Even when we go away from the Father he still cherishes 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. If we believe these words, and act accordingly we will ultimately share forever in the life of the Trinity, our true destiny.