



**The Chapels Royal of St Peter ad Vincula and St John the Evangelist
HM Tower of London**

Newsletter for Thursday 08 June 2023

Dear friends,

First of all, thank you very much to those who brought items for the City of London Hygiene Bank last Sunday. These will be gratefully received by those in need. Click [here](#) for the latest update on their requirements but I think it worthwhile repeating here the list of desperately-needed items which featured in last week's Newsletter:

Items we desperately need:

- Toothpaste
- Toothbrush (child/adult)
- Shampoo/conditioner
- Shower gel
- Razors
- Shaving foam
- Deodorant
- Hairbrush/hair ties
- Nit comb/nit shampoo
- Period products
- Nappies
- Baby wipes
- Toilet roll
- Laundry detergent

Do, please, keep those items coming week by week. The collection box will be just inside the Chapel.

Last Sunday, 04 June, was Trinity Sunday and, taking the different Bible readings that we used at the 0915 and 1100 services, we tried to get to grips with the doctrine of the Trinity which, as Roger pointed out last week, is central to Christian belief. I know from comments on the way out (our equivalent of exit polls) that at least some people thought that the exercise was worthwhile and provided food for thought. Although the final verses of the Gospel according to Matthew contain the clear instruction to the disciples from our Lord, **“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost”**, the early church did not formalise its understanding of the Trinity until the fourth century. As you will see later in this Newsletter, I have found a rather wonderful and whimsical account of the Council of Nicaea (or should that be Constantinople?) as our poem for this week. I hope you enjoy it.

Best wishes and blessings to all,
Cortland.

Sunday Service Details for 11th June 2023
The First Sunday after Trinity

0915 Holy Communion St Peter ad Vincula
1100 Choral Matins St Peter ad Vincula

Psalm 112

Readings

Job 29:11-16 and John 15:12-17

Collect for The First Sunday after Trinity

O GOD, the strength of all them that put their trust in thee, mercifully accept our prayers;
And because through the weakness of our mortal nature we can do no good thing without thee,
Grant us the help of thy grace, that in keeping of thy commandments we may please thee,
both in will and deed; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Our Congregation

Last Wednesday, the Worshipful Company of Coopers celebrated their annual service in the Chapel of St Peter ad Vincula, with cadets lining the route to the Chapel.



Historic Royal Palaces

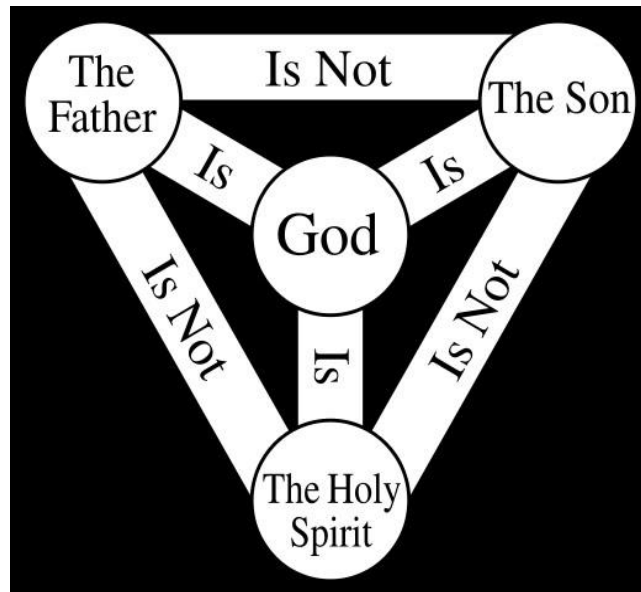
The Tower moat has now re-opened to visitors, for everyone to enjoy the wildflowers.



Poem of the week: The Trinity monologue – in the manner of Stanley Holloway, by Godfrey Rust

Godfrey Rust was born in London in 1953 and has lived in Ealing in west London since 1984. He is married to Tessa, a retired Church of England minister, formerly chaplain at Heathrow Airport and an adviser to the Diocese of London. They met and married at All Souls, Langham Place, London and since 1986 have been members and leaders at St John's Church in West Ealing. Source: [Godfrey Rust, biographical notes \(wordsout.co.uk\)](https://www.wordsout.co.uk/biography/godfrey-rust) accessed 05 June 2023.

The following poem was written by Godfrey for Trinity Sunday, 1998.



The Trinity monologue – in the manner of Stanley Holloway

The Early Fathers of the church, in Asia Minor
(that's Turkey to the likes of you and me)
once decided that nothing would be finer
than to have a get-together by the sea.

In AD 325 (or somewhere near)
they found a place with which they were content:
they looked around and said *Well, it's Nicaea** –
just the place to have a Council! – so they went.

They did things to make religion more reliable,
outed heresies and voted bishops in,
even settled on which books make up the Bible –
then sat back and let the great debate begin.

On one side they said that God was undivided;
on the other, Father, Son and Holy Ghost.
For a time it seemed that it would be decided
by the volume of the side that shouted most.

But the Council wouldn't let this fuss defeat it –
a resourceful synod it would prove to be,
for they saw that they could have their cake and eat it
and they came up with the Holy Trinity.

God was One, and he could not be put asunder:
yet His oneness had three persons, they'd evince.
It was settled! They shook hands in peace and wonder –
and we've been trying to understand it ever since.

You can think of him as one, and that's no bother;
you can think of them as three, and that's just fine –
but if you try to mix one thought in with the other
you can never tell where you should draw the line.

Like that picture of the candlesticks and faces,
or Escher's stairways that go down, yet don't go down,
or like being the same time in different places –
it's just something we can't get our heads around.

For a Hindu, twenty gods are not too many,
while one deity alone's allowed by Jews;
Buddhists calmly smile and say they haven't any
(Jehovah's Witnesses do everything in twos)

but when a Christian tries to do this calculation
it's a method's that's as old as is the sun
the answer is to use multiplication –
for one times one times one is always one.

You might think this sleight of hand a bit surprising,
or that theology's completely on the rocks,
but I think our knowledge of our God is rising
when we find we've stumbled on a paradox.

He's a puzzle not for those who are faint-hearted –
he does stuff that can make Einstein look a dunce.
He will finish things before he's even started
and be everywhere –and nowhere –all at once.

It's a riddle that's as elegant as any –
as one person can be body, mind and soul,
or as a family is one, and yet is many
so the Godhead is both separate, and whole.

When we try to label, pigeonhole or brand him
and to make God in our image, we've been blind.
Do we really think that we could understand him?
or them? or those? Or – oh, look, never mind –

it's a lesson that's been handed down by history –
there's a time to kneel and not keep asking why,
only worship God in all his ancient mystery –
One-in-Three, and out of time – and so am I!

Written for Trinity Sunday at St John's, West Ealing, in 1998 at the request of Mark Bratton, who was then curate at the church.

**There is a significant degree of historical compression or licence in this account. Strictly speaking, the Council of Nicaea formally neither settled the Biblical canon (which was already informally established by that point) nor debated the Trinity per se, but the related contentious issue of the divinity of Christ, on which the Trinity of course depends. The concept of a Trinity had already been suggested in the writings of many of the early Church Fathers and was more fully realised 25 years later at the Council of Constantinople, but "Constantinople" isn't very good as a pun unless you're describing someone who is a reliable driver of a German car. © Godfrey Rust, www.wordsout.co.uk.*

Jigsaw

<https://www.jigsawplanet.com/?rc=play&pid=1ed4f6591c14>



Prayers

Please continue to remember those on our sick list, some of whom are very ill, amongst whom we name: Norma, Ann, Ros, Mark, Madeleine, Dan, Derek, Colin, Ian, Patti, Florence and Kofi.

Please continue to pray for Ukraine:

God of peace and justice, we pray for the people of Ukraine today.

We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.

We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow, that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.

We pray for those with power over war or peace,

for wisdom, discernment and compassion to guide their decisions.

Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear,
that you would hold and protect them.

We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of peace. Amen

With best wishes to all, Cortland.



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