



RELATIONSHIPS OF LOVE

We live in a time when preferred gender pronouns such as 'he/him', 'she/her' or 'they/them' are stated. It can all be very confusing, and people struggle with it and challenge this concept. So, what do we make of a singular, yet plural God? A trinity of persons, one God with three distinct persons? In Ireland, the first response is usually to ignore it (priests take note!) and say it's a 'mystery' so there is no point thinking about it. Some go further and make a virtue of that and claim it's arrogant (a sin) to try to understand it. Given that everything about God is a mystery, that approach reduces one to accepting God in your life and saying your prayers. You could call it 'blind faith' – admirable, but not very satisfying ... Maybe that dissatisfaction is what lies behind people saying, 'I'm spiritual but not religious.' Does that statement of being spiritual and not religious mean that they DO have deep questions about life and its meaning, but don't find any answers within formal religion? Just a thought.

If we are real about our faith that the Son of God took human flesh, then it's a fair deduction to assume that our God wants to be known. Our First Reading gives us a hint at the identity of God: 'a God of tenderness and compassion, slow to

anger, rich in kindness and faithfulness'. God is defined more by love than by logic.

Summertime is peak season for weddings. In meeting couples preparing for marriage and living marriage over the years, they can never fully explain it, but they know this love is real – and experienced, not described. It is never alone and isolated. It celebrates everything: birthdays, social occasions, engagements, baptisms, a night in or out. It is marked by presence and sometimes a present of flowers, a casual arm around the shoulder, a hug, a kiss, a smile. This kind of love reaches out and includes. It is expressed outside of our marriages, in caring for the neighbour and

community, volunteering and helping, supporting a good cause. I like to define it as 'Godspotting' – all these simple, seemingly inconsequential things are the stuff of the Trinity. Going back to 'spiritual and not religious'. The word 'religio' – as in 'religion' – means to bind. If we claim to be truly spiritual, then our relationships of love must be expressed everywhere. The Trinity wants to share their life of love with us ... and we who are made in the image and likeness of God are called to be a reflection of this. ■

– Tom Cox

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and for ever.

Lord Jesus Christ, ... **Amen.**
The peace of the Lord be with you always.
And with your spirit.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins ...

Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Communion Antiphon (Gal 4:6)

Since you are children of God, God has sent into your hearts the Spirit of his Son, the Spirit who cries out: Abba, Father.

Prayer after Communion

May receiving this Sacrament, O Lord our God, bring us health of body and soul, as we confess your eternal holy Trinity and undivided Unity.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.



Reflection

What has helped you towards self-acceptance?



Lesson

'The Lord, a God of tenderness and compassion, is slow to anger and rich in kindness and faithfulness.'



Prayer

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

