**TRINITY SUNDAY 7th June 2020**

**Readings: Isaiah 6: 1 – 8 Psalm 29 Romans 8: 12 – 17 John 3: 1 - 17**

Over the last couple of months, we have all experienced a situation that none of us have ever known. It has become known as the ‘Lock down.’

Here we all are – trying to cope with the difficulties of staying at home – isolating ourselves from each other – social distancing – in order to protect each other, and ourselves from this terrible virus.

It has been, and continues to be, a testing time for families, and individuals, and for all who have had to continue going to work, or working from home. It’s also been a testing time for parents, trying to keep their children focused on their lessons – and also keeping them happy and well.

It’s hard to get a true picture of how people are coping. The media likes to concentrate on extremes, - suffering and tragedy – or the tremendous sacrifices being made to keep us going. There has been emphasis on family and community – individual and collective acts of heroism and generosity, and clever initiatives to encourage people, especially those with children. ‘ Happy families’ is the ideal – but probably the truth for many people is far from that.

There is no doubt one of the greatest things to be tested is our capacity for relationship. It’s difficult to maintain relationships without a great deal of effort if you live alone. No amount of ‘face timing’ can compensate for the lack of human contact – though it helps. And many have to live with that fact anyway if their children live abroad. And if you are living in close proximity with family, often people can experience relationship strain as ‘lock down’ drags on and on.

Yet paradoxically I think the idea of relationship is benefitting from this period of enforced restriction.

I have been heartened to see families together enjoying time with each other. I have seen and heard children delighting in this precious time shared with their parents. And I have seen neighbours, who normally pass like ships in the night, often hardly ever speaking – getting to know each other, and enjoying a sense of ‘we’re all in this together.’ And I have seen our community, ( always special in this respect) pulling together in remarkable ways.

When we respond to each other with warmth and mutual understanding we are reflecting something of that heavenly relationship of God the Father – God the Son and God the Holy Spirit – The Holy Trinity.

That wonderful sentence, “God so loved the world that He gave his only Son...” in fact that whole passage, illustrates the working of Father Son and Holy Spirit in relationship. One does not act without the other – there is no individualism here.

So much is happening around us at the moment. – the pandemic overshadows everything – pain and suffering break out everywhere. All the more reason, therefore, for us to work even harder to create better and stronger relationships in all areas of life.

We all need each other – especially now. Our faith in Father Son and Holy Spirit is a precious gift to be used to reach out to those around us, - to reflect God’s wonderful love for us all, and to give people hope.

This is my prayer for us all which I say every day. You’ve probably heard it before, but it’s worth repeating.

God of care and compassion.

You take us through deep water, but never abandon us in the storm.

We walk in darkness, but you never leave us without light.

Be with us in the night of our anxiety, and in the day of our over confidence,

that we may keep faith with You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and with each other. **Amen.**