

## **Holy Team Games!**

*Isaiah 6<sup>1-8</sup>; Psalm 29; Romans 8<sup>12-17</sup>; John 3<sup>1-17</sup>*

*Your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out!  
[Isaiah 6<sup>7</sup>]*

This annual celebration of the Holy and Undivided Trinity reminds us that our One God is a community within himself. The three expressions of that one life are experienced by us as we know Him and them as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

What is so positive and exciting is that, because of the Doctrine of the Trinity, we have assurance that we are included in this community in God. We are part of their shared life now and it is our inheritance that we will always share in that life within and beyond time.

All of God, working together, achieves for us the gift that we receive as our faith:

- ✘ Isaiah shows us that it is possible (against all expectations) to be in the presence of the living God and survive! In this vision of God enthroned in heaven, with all the glory of angels and seraphs, singing that eternal Sanctus, **Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory**, Isaiah becomes aware of his unworthiness – **woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!** Yet in this vision Isaiah hears the words, **your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out.**

God sets us free from ourselves, from our past and for our future: that is why Isaiah's hand was the first to be up when there was the question, **whom shall I send, and who will go for us** (note the plural)?

Through God's deliberate cleansing we are made to belong in God.

- ✘ Romans tells us about our status as adopted members of Gods' family, grafted into that community that is God.

There has been a great deal about slavery in the news and, despite the fact that the New Testament treats slavery as a normal part of life, it was

Christians who were, rightly, at the forefront of having this cruel and inhuman practice ended. Sadly, we need those voices still as modern slavery is still a blight on civilised society!

It is the transition from being a slave, with no rights and being of no account, to being an adopted child with the full rights as an heir and to belonging, that Paul celebrates. Adoption is permanent and adds a security to belonging. That is why, unlike slaves, there is no need to **fear**.

Through God's deliberate choice we are made to belong in God.

- ✘ John repeats Jesus' teaching that, in the power of the Spirit, we begin again!

There is a reason why our conscious mind doesn't remember the experience of birth – it is just a bit traumatic for the baby and the mother (as Call the Midwife delights in revealing). No wonder Nicodemus struggled with the concept of doing it all again!

Yet, that is what the Spirit does and something we re-enact in Baptism: being born again. God the Father sent God the Son so that God the Spirit can bring us to that new birth. That is what that first text that most of us committed to memory means: **For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.**

Through God's invitation to be **born again** we are made to belong in God.

I am aware that some think that the doctrine of the Trinity is difficult – but it isn't as it is about the community in God. We don't have to explain it, we just have to experience it – from the inside, because all of God is committed to us seeing it, sharing in it, from the inside!