

# Reflections on the Gospel

## GOD OF LOVE

The feast of the Holy Trinity brings the whole long sweep of Lent and Eastertide to an end. It invites us to sit back, as it were, and reflect upon the God who has been revealed in the full scope of the paschal mystery.

As sometimes presented, the doctrine of the Trinity can appear to be nothing but an arid theological puzzle. For the early Christians it was nothing of the kind. They held firmly to the Jewish belief that there was only one God. Yet as they reflected upon what they had experienced in all the events surrounding the person of Jesus Christ and the subsequent gift of the Spirit, they could only conclude that they had been addressed and drawn into a divine communion of love.

Today's feast, then, celebrates the nearness, rather than the remoteness, of God.

Each of the readings explores this in some way. But the Gospel, drawn from the concluding section of Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus, most clearly brings out the continuity between the act of Christ in the paschal mystery and redemptive love of the Father.

The Father sent the Son, not to 'judge' (= condemn) the world, but to rescue it from its captivity to sin and death, and draw human beings into the communion of life and love that is the Godhead.

Judgement is not so much a future prospect as something that human beings determine for themselves by the way they respond to the revelation of God that comes to us through the life of Jesus and the grace of the Holy Spirit.