

God-Triune Being

The New Testament's claim about God is that 'God is Love'. God in himself is Love and he is Love in relation to us. It is only because of Christ that we can say God is Trinity. But it is because God is Trinity we can say that God so loved the world in Christ. Richard of St. Victor held that it is due to this love, this eternal generosity, reciprocity and shared delight between Father, Son and Spirit that we can speak of supreme goodness of God. The nature of love is to give, therefore each person in the Trinity mutually seeks, delights in the other. St. Augustine explains this as: "Each are in each, and all in each, and each in all, and all in all, and all are one". ***This shows how words cannot fully fathom the depth of God as Love but calls for silent contemplation of the mystery.***

God as Trinity allows us to understand the meaning of the events in Christ's life as bringing the new creation back to union with God's love-creation is restored to its original beauty. Theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar understands God as "***eternal happening***". The first instance of our knowledge of this fact is that the Triune God revealed himself in Christ as an ***event*** of love. In ordinary sense "event" stands for possible or factual happening of anything. There is something more to an event than the obvious. Important events in life like encountering the beloved, birth of a child or being granted an undeserved forgiveness lead human mind to discover the depth of every being including one's own self. Romano Guardini states, "in the experience of great love all of what takes place becomes an event within it". Event is seen as a donation, a giving.

There can be no speech about God apart from what Christ reveals of God. What is it that Christ reveals of the eventful nature of God? Christ presents himself as an event, as the unexpected, overabundant gift of himself to us [Rom 5:15; Heb 1:1-2; 9:14]. He has given himself for our sins [Rom 5:10]. References to Christ as a gift, who gives himself for me/us: Gal 2:20; Phil 2:7; Rom 8:32; Titus 2:14. In John's gospel Christ is the One who remains with God [Jn 15:10], he is the sent-one [Jn 5-7]. Sending here means Christ's eternal life which is an absolute loving relation between him and God. It is from this eternal event of love that an action of love is coming toward us. Christ himself explains the mystery of his divine personhood as a ***filial relationship with God***, calling God as his Abba/Father [Mk 14:36; Lk 3:22]. The Father is at the center of his person. The Father has loved the Son from the beginning and has given him everything, his own glory [Jn 17:24-26]. The unity between Father and Son is explained in the fact that Jesus does and says only what he sees the Father doing [Jn 5:19-20]. This relation of love is a mutual indwelling-***Jesus is in the Father and Father is in him*** [Jn 14:10-11].

Christ speaks of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Truth [Jn 16:12-13], ***the Spirit of the Father*** [Jn 15:26], ***his own Spirit*** [Jn 19:28-30], the one who guides man to the fullness of Truth [Jn 3:34]. In Christ God presents himself as infinitely rich **communion of love-Trinitarian Event**. Balthasar calls this divine event of **three-fold donations**. Persons in Trinity must be understood in terms of relation. He explains: the Father's identity from all eternity is that of giving himself to the beloved Son and along with and through the Son to the Holy Spirit. The totality of the love between Father and Son is the exuberance of yet another, who is both unity and fruit of their love, the Holy Spirit. Both processions [eternal generations

of Son and Spirit¹) are to be understood in terms of love. The Father's divinity is possessed by him only as completely given away; he remains himself in the total gift of himself. The Father is, from all eternity, the one who pours himself forth to another, first to the beloved Son and with and through him to the Spirit. The Father is the inexhaustible source which has always surrendered himself without losing himself and therefore from all eternity he is with the Son and the Holy Spirit [Lk 6:36; Eph2:4; Rom 8:32]. The Son and the Spirit respond to the Father's surrender with an equal surrender [mutual giving of each other]. The divine persons are present to each other in their coming from another and being with and in the other. **This cannot be understood in temporal terms [as something happened in the past] because God is eternal presence and relation between Father, Son and Spirit is the inner life of God, the way God is.**

We know God as Trinity from the knowledge imparted by Jesus. The best way to grasp this mystery is in terms of love, God as loving communion of persons. Love is the utterly free affirmation of the other that a person while allowing him to be himself, always generates a unity that is considerate [respect] of the other's difference; that is to say a unity able to see the other for what the other is. **In this sense there is absolute oneness and difference of persons in God as Trinity.**

The Christ event [incarnation of the Word/Son of God becoming man] is an unforeseen and ungraspable event that gives meaning to human life and history. Christ-event unfolds the hidden design in man's creation that he is called to be and enjoy as son/daughter of God in the Son [Jesus Christ]. In Christ God is giving himself to man and he awaits man's return to him.

Father Jose

¹ The terms Procession and generation here cannot be understood in physical terms. We are trying to comprehend, as far as possible, the mystery of God as Trinity using human language.