

Fr Kevin Dillon - HOMILY DATED 16.06.2019

Most of us are familiar with the saying that a picture is worth a thousand words. Often that is the case, although sometimes words can have a power that a picture doesn't necessarily present. One of the benefits of the technological age is that with the advent of Google and You-tube, search engines and the like, we can begin to learn, at least a little, about things we may never have picked up an Encyclopaedia to read about.

For example, if you want to while away a few minutes, or hours, or even get immersed in something mind boggling and fascinating, just Google in the words – 'the vastness of the universe'. Just make sure that you have got a very large piece of paper so that you can fit in the many zeros of how far it is from whatever to whatever, the earth to the sun, the earth to the sun to the planet Pluto, between planets, from this galaxy to the next galaxy, from this galaxy to the Milky Way. Just make sure that you have a very very big piece of paper, because there are so many zeros that you will more than likely be heading out to get another.

It's only because we have the opportunity to get this knowledge now, that we can put down the basis of what we want to think or learn about, and it's a beginning. When we have a look at the universe in which we live it's one thing to look at the sun, for a very short time, look at the moon, look at the stars when it's not full of clouds, that we begin to understand what a very tiny dot we are.

I think it was called New Horizons; an investigative satellite sent up by the US around twelve to thirteen years ago to get to the planet Pluto. It took it about seven years to get there travelling at some extraordinary speed – it's still going. The mind boggles, and rightly so, to conjure up what we are a part of.

The amazing thing though, is that for us, we're here because we believe in God, but there are all of those other people who have access to the you-tube clips, but it doesn't get to first base, they couldn't be less interested, they put themselves down as non-believers in anything. It's a bit hard to understand for those of us who do believe, but it's there to remind us perhaps that faith is a gift.

Today we have this opportunity with this Feast of the Holy Trinity to think about the importance of God in our life in a real way. If you came here on Trinity Sunday thinking you would have a very learned explanation of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and how they all relate to one another, you had better go somewhere else because I can't give it to you. I can't even understand Google Maps!

But while I don't understand Google Maps, I know that it works and it's helpful to me because I can get in the car and enter where I want to go and it will tell me how I can get there and in the current traffic conditions. How it does it I have no idea but it's still very useful. So, we don't need to explain a lot of things. They are still very useful.

And our faith and trust in a loving God is still very useful. There is something in the human spirit that demands some explanations to the fundamental questions – Who are we? Why are we here? Where are we going after death? Why is life good for this person and bad for that person? We struggle with these questions. Particularly when they affect us personally. When good people are doing good things and yet bad things happen to them. Or things happen when we are weakest and most vulnerable, and they happen in twos, or threes, or fours, or they never stop and we say, 'Where is this God? Why isn't he looking after me?' Later, when we maybe got through it, we might look back and say he was there after all.

This whole notion of this vast universe, and the other question that runs alongside, 'Is there life out there?' 'Who are they?' 'Are they watching us?' 'Are there aliens?'

The chief astronomer, Jose Funes, of the Vatican (a couple of years back), said, 'If aliens exist, they may be a different life form that doesn't need the redemption of Christ. It is difficult to exclude the possibility that other intelligent life exists somewhere in the universe.' He noted that one field of astronomy was actively looking for biomarkers. That whole notion of other forms of life, and where Jesus fits into that, and how the whole concept of God fits into that, is a very difficult one indeed.

But on Trinity Sunday how do we make this work for us? We've come together to pray and to acknowledge God's existence, but more so his care and his love. Last year a movie called, and Interview with God was released, but I thought that rather than play a clip I would read to you from it. This is from the movie that we released some years ago.

Last night, I dreamed I had an interview with God.

"So, you would like to interview me?" God asked, mildly amused.

"If you have the time..." I said hesitantly. Being very nervous, I could not even finish my sentence. After all, the privilege to interview God personally is not something to take lightly!

God smiled. No, there was no trace of derision or frown on his face. Just endless kindness and patience. With a soothing voice, God said: "My time is eternity. What questions do you have in mind for me?"

"What surprises you most about humankind?" I finally managed to ask.

God answered:

"That they get bored with childhood, they rush to grow up... and then long to be children again.

That they lose their health to make money... and then lose their money to restore their health.

That by thinking anxiously about the future, they forget the present... such that they live in neither the present nor the future.

That they live as if they'll never die... and die as though they had never lived."

God's hand took mine and we were silent for a while.

And then I asked: "As a parent, what are some of life's lessons you want your children to learn?"

God thought for a brief moment and then replied:

"To learn they cannot make anyone love them. All they can do is always trying their best to be loveable.

To learn to forgive others by remembering their own mistakes.

To learn that it is not enough that they forgive one another, but that they must also forgive themselves.

To learn that two people can look at the same thing and see it differently.

To learn that it only takes a few seconds to open profound wounds in those who love them; wounds that can take many years to heal.

To learn that there are people who love them dearly, but simply have not yet learned how to express or show their feelings.

To learn that a rich person is not one who has the most, but is one who needs the least.

To learn that it is not good to compare themselves to others."

"Thank you for your time," I said humbly.

"Is there anything else you would like your children to know?"

God smiled and said, "Just know that I am always here."