

Timothy Radcliffe OP. Address to English Bishops 2007

Peace be with You.

Now the company of those who believed were of one heart and soul and so one said that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had everything in common. Acts 4:32 Yet, Ananias and Sapphira & Deacons dispute.

From start were both at peace and squabbling. Risen Christ says: “Peace with you,” which Word begins New Creation. Catacombs graves early say In Pace. Peace must begin with acceptance of its lack as relaxation begins with tension.

They did not recognise Xt till resurrection. No society that had slavery had fully accepted Pax Dei.

Relationship between Truth and Unity – is not truth divisive? Yet we are one body so we must!

Dialogue is the Asian way of preaching Christ – otherwise it would be discourteous, and therefore would not be ‘true’ to Christ. Trinity is eternal conversation between the three persons.

Truth of God: found in statements or in the mystery? Thomas Aquinas at end of life had mystical experience and said that in comparison all his words were straw – but he needed his words to get him there. (cf. Emmaus) “It is the Lord” is what has to be relived constantly.

Yet we can zoom too quickly to mystery.

Consistency will not allow profundity. Come at truth from different angles – triangulate the Trinity. (Jesus is human yet divine; Three and yet one). You need two eyes to see clearly yet each eye sees something different. Aquinas struggled with western insight that wanted Vision and Eastern which said God is unseeable. Inconsistency makes us uncomfortable – we dare to wait on God. But note the interesting contradictions within ourselves.

Resurrection: Mary's attentive and practical love; Peter's courageous impetuous love; John's intelligent love. No competition here just different loves.

But Church has made boundary statements in creeds, but they were attempts not to shut out but reach a more capacious sense of God.

Heretic is usually not someone who has it wrong but has absolutised an insight. Has cramped the mystery and refused the creative tension. The madman lives in the prison of one clean idea. So as we reject heresy, try to liberate its truth.

Communion:

Images founded on Empire – on possessions, on what we own cf Austro-Hungary, Spain or Portugal. This is not of one heart (lit. unanimous) James Alison speaks of 'Nuremberg Worship' of ecstatic comradeship. This is a unanimity which abolishes difference and looks at those outside as non-pure. A brainless obedience to concept of community. Mobile society can hunger for this security in identity.

Must first face differences within. Shakespeare wrote in genius after 1599 when he looked internal to his heroes. We present to world the persona which excludes all we don't like about ourselves.

What you see is what you get: learn to see world without needing to own it or photograph it. Most violent voice is the shop keeper and busyness. Eve's sin of consuming the apple. We take possession of each other, but Jesus lets us go, not even grasping at divinity. Free to say, "I am".