

+ In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

I think this may be the very last time I deliver services to you online on a Saturday, God willing. From next week 75 people may be in one inside place as long as the appropriate distancing is observed. Yay! How long has it been since we have gathered together in church? By my reckoning it has been 12 weeks. I cannot believe it has been that long. Haven't we all gotten used to being apart? Routines have changed now, and it will be another challenge to change again, try and recover what we have lost. I think it's important that we don't think that coming back to church will be the same as it was before. Everything has changed. The world has turned, and we are in a new age. COVID will be with us now just as the viruses of generations before have stayed after their unwelcome arrival. It is how we adapt now that matters. The church will not be the same, but it will still be the church, as it has continued to be the church over the last 12 weeks.

We're out of sync with the church calendar. We are celebrating the Holy Trinity of God today, not a week ago. But that is ok. Pentecost for we at St Luke's came a week later because we hoped that the church might have been able to celebrate more fully, and now we are at Trinity Sunday, still 20 people. For those who are here in the church it is still Saturday. The football is on tonight and 2000 people can gather. The trains and buses are packed, but the church can on this day only have 20 people. But our faith has held us along the way. We witness the world entering a new age. Ages come and go, but this epoch is definitely something new.

Even before the virus people were marching on the streets in Hong Kong and around the world for various causes. Something was on the edge of changing. Perhaps no one thought change would look like this. How we are reminded of our mortality. In addition to the change brought about by the disease there is the social complications. How ever does 'social distancing' correlate to human community? Have any of you tried to enter an aged care facility recently? The experience can be described as overwhelming – hand sanitiser is one thing, and even the flu vaccination, but a copy of personal records held on an anonymous file with security non one could assure, multiple forms, face masks, temperature checks, recording of the temperature on separate forms and on an entry register, then supervised hand washing... I felt like I had done something wrong. Is this

really about protecting the elderly or vulnerable resident? Or is it an institution more concerned about protecting itself? No matter, I will be back. People are more important than the procedures.

Australians are still emerging ready for the next day. The tenacity of spirit is encouraging. We battle on because we are not ready to give up.

And so today we celebrate the Holy Trinity of God. This is a summation of the cycle from birth, baptism, through ministry, suffering, death, resurrection, ascension, the sending of the Holy Spirit – the completion of the salvific events of Christ the Son of God. Today we recall that God has always been before and always is and will be for ever after. The Trinity of God is the eternal union of God the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit. This unchanging fact is encouraging in a time when people take to the streets to claim identity and campaign to change the things that have been denied them in a monochrome history.

I hate seeing old statues topple. I am an historian and classicist. Old things are important to me because they remind me of what has gone before. Some things ought not be forgotten, even if that part of the past is painful. How will children and future generations learn about the figures who did great things yet participated in evil structures and institutions if the evidence is smashed down or washed away? History tells multi-faceted stories. The faces that are honoured for one thing have always done another less honourable thing. Lest we forget the complex web of the human story.

Today we recall that at the end of the Gospel of Matthew Jesus commissioned the disciples to go into the world in the name of this trinitarian God, three persons, one God, to do the work that the Spirit had empowered them to do. We are the new disciples. We continue this same work today. Circumstances are changed but God is still and ever will be the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. May you and those whom you love and care for be blessed always by this eternal God. Amen.