

TRINITY NEWS

John 17:1-12 The Listener

This is the Lord's Prayer. The Our Father that we use is at Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:1-4. What were the original Aramaic words? What does it tell us about his own prayer to his heavenly Father? It is a prayer that reflects Jesus' inner sense of being in the Father. What does this mean?

We say in the Nicene Creed that we believe *in* God, the God the Father Almighty. We don't say that we believe *about* the Father. Prayer is not an abstract exercise. It is a deliberate attempt to enter the heart of the Father. The Father is not in an impenetrable glass bubble. No, the Father wants us to come to visit. We cannot travel by jet to see the Father. We send a stream of prayer that penetrates space and time. The word we send is sheathed in Spirit and the only blocks in the way are those erected by negatives from us. Christ left only positive markers into God's heart, a 'location' that he called Hashamayim, the heavens. It is like someone leaving markers behind as they travel so that they can be found. When we find Christ we discover the Father.

The stylised language of this prayer does not stifle its intention to be what Augustine called a *verbum cordis*, a "word of the heart."

Jesus speaks to a 'true God' and that those who follow him 'know in truth.' The word for 'truth' means 'not hidden', 'free of falsehood', 'in the process of being discerned'. In Jesus' heart-language, Aramaic, truth means that which is revealed in our encounters with God.

When we bow our heads in prayer, whether in company at worship or alone, how close are we to being *in* the Father, *in* Jesus, *in* the Holy Spirit as we say of our beliefs in the Nicene Creed?

When Christ prays, he draws a circle around himself, those with him, and those who have been drawn by their witness. He assumes that the Father is also in the circle, and also beyond it, as the original creator of inclusive encirclement.

I finished reading Karen Armstrong's *The Spiral Staircase* late one night this week. She was a nun for seven years who never experienced God and became a non-believer. "As I knelt in chapel, watching my sisters kneeling quietly with their heads bowed contemplatively in their hands, I would sometimes wonder whether it wasn't a bit like the Emperor's New Clothes. Nobody ever experienced God but nobody dared to admit it. And then I would mentally shake myself. How could God reveal himself to a nun who harbored such shocking doubts?"

Karen was quite right to question this deficiency, though she was not encouraged to do so by the spiritual advisers.

Prayer tests our closeness with God. It is not theory but conversation. There is no such thing as impersonal conversation even at the most abstract level. The speaker enters the conversation and so does the listener.

As you kneel in prayer and put your hands together, signifying a meeting between yourself and God, where are you?

Bishop Arthur Jones

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: Acts 2: 1-11; Psalm 104;
1 Corinthians 12:4-13; John 20:19-23 *or* John 14:8-17

THIS WEEK:

June 7, Tuesday.

- Bible Study, 10am
- Bible Study, 7:15pm @ the Tutton's (#3 Sta. Potenciana, Urdaneta Village

June 9, Thursday.

- Midweek Eucharist, 10am, Chapel.



A Pot luck brunch will be held on **Trinity Sunday, 19 June 2011** following the **combined service at 9.00 am**. Activities for that Sunday will include our children, the youth, and adults. The event will enable parishioners to get to know each other better. **All are welcome to attend!**

Please indicate your attendance by filling in the sign-up sheet on the Notice Board outside the main office, to ensure there are sufficient seats, cutlery, and array of food, etc., PLUS fun activities to cater for the various age groups. Thank you!