

WORD – PRESENCE

We say that The Blessed Trinity, in the person of Jesus, is present when the scriptures are proclaimed. We name the scriptures as THE WORD OF GOD.

Yet many of the readings, particularly for weekdays, tell of the disasters and tragedies humankind brings on itself. The apostasy of the Israelites, the deviations and manipulations of Saul and David, the graphic description of Deborah's ruthlessness, the jealousy and greed of Ahab and his wife, Jezebel, and so much more, may find us questioning whether God is or could be, or would even want to be present!

The same can be said of the Christian scriptures. There is cruelty, betrayal, jealousy, pride, adultery – no commandment is spared – in the telling of the Gospel story. The early Christian communities fiercely defended their independence and faced scandals from within and without. Paul's ministry was a constant struggle; families were split; religious factions fought for supremacy. The Christian Church did not begin life with everyone loving one another!

And we say Jesus is present when the scriptures are proclaimed.

THE TRUTH WE NEED TO REALISE is that God's presence is not dependent on our worthiness. It's precisely because of our Unworthiness that God sent His only Son. *God loved the world so much* – that, in human terms, he could not stand by and watch us destroy creation. God stepped into the mess we'd made and started the clean-up.

God gave us Jesus as Redeemer; Jesus gives the Holy Spirit as *helper and guide*. They are given to work alongside us – not to make us do the right thing, or to punish our failures, but to encourage us, to help us live up to our role as partners in the work of building up creation and in reaching perfection.

THE PROCLAIMER OF THE WORD reveals the presence of Jesus in the midst of our messiness, and has the privileged task of opening listening ears to really HEAR the message that there is a way out. As Proclaimer you can rekindle hope in a troubled heart; you can bring new to strength to the wavering flame and reassurance to the broken reed that feels about to be crushed.