

## ***Being human, being divine. What makes us human?***

**05 November 2009**

### ***Images of God***

#### **We are created in God's image**

'... We are already God's children, but what we shall be has not yet been revealed. Yet we know that when Christ appears we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.'

#### **Images of God**

- Parenthood
- One substance
- Three? Persons?
- God = love.
- God = spirit.
- God = sophia? (Wisdom literature).
- Qualities of sophia (Wisdom literature) are much the same as those of love (1 Corinthians 13).
- God = logos (John). In the Hellenistic culture of the day, some might have regarded logos as the formula of arrangement common to all things (Heraclitus), so 'natural law' perhaps. Is God, then, the laws of physics?
- God = the big bang?
- God = the singularity at the centre of a black hole?
- God, logos, sophia, spirit, love – all the same? Note the question mark. Most Christian theologians would not go quite this far. Difficulties arise with essence, substance, person.
- Does God create from something else? or from Godself, i.e. love?
- Love is sharing. God is sharing – Trinity represents an inner sharing between the three 'persons' (hypostases). God is community of love.
- The whole cosmos is God? (pantheism, God is everything, is not compatible with Christian doctrines; on the other hand, panentheism, God is in everything, is compatible with Christian doctrines, since it allows for God to be more than everything. This is an oversimplification but it will do for the moment).
- 'What is not God is nothing' (Bulgakov).

#### **Images of Jesus**

- What questions would you ask him if he were to walk into the room?
- Jesus as 'personification' of logos, sophia, antithesis of chaos.
- Jesus is logos - word, and word is 'the activity of [God's] thought outwards.' (Schleiermacher).

#### **Images of HS**

- Fire, air, flame

#### **How do we perceive God?**

- Biology
- Senses
- Emotion
- Revelation
- Inspiration
- Otherness

Abortion, Euthanasia, In vitro fertilization, Embryo research, Competition or cooperation?, Eternal life—now or then? Stem cells. Rituals—waking to sleeping, So what makes us human?