Dispelling of Ignorance

There’s lots we can talk about today on this subject, especially when all we in Australia need to do for a dose of embarrassing entertainment and political blood-sport is to look to our NE … and note the shenanigans going on in the Home of the Free. A person, the president no less … trying to steal a democratically-constituted election, and using threats, intimidation and disinformation to do it. And really that’s not so unusual … leaders … whether elected or simply self-installed, have been doing this for centuries.

No … what’s most disturbing is that 72 million people voted for him, despite the lies which were obvious to everyone else. Now not all members of the GOP would now say the president was robbed of an election win … some have seen the truth … but a significant number … many many millions … still do. In the face of all the facts, they still take the path taken by Kayleigh McEneny … lie, then repeat it often enough so that many will still believe. Then walk away.

And this is the other thing that’s been going on for thousands of years … disinformation. Spread the lie. Spread the half-truth. It’s a new word for us … it’s just that with the digital connectivity we all share, stupidity, lies, untruths, selective truths and the like are all spread firstly far more quickly … but then given a level of credibility which defies logic, defies description … it makes us look stupid … and as a society, it diminishes all of us. And we think of the utter rubbish promulgated by the grandson of the great evangelist Billy Graham, who like so many in my youth, I managed to hear … and from him, to learn.

Disinformation, half-truths, incomplete analyses, and just plain fanciful waffle, political and religious alike, have been with us a long time … but even if we hear it, we do not have to act on it. We are so much better than that.

Christ had something to say on this subject. You see, today is not just the Sunday before Advent … with its special readings as we heard from our Deacon of the Mass, Vicki. It’s also the 24th Sunday after Trinity … the conclusion of the Season of Trinity, and it has its own Epistle and Gospel … so take it away Luke:

*So Jesus answered them … He said … my teaching is not mine … but His who sent me. If any man’s will is to do His will, he shall know whether the teaching is from God, or whether I am speaking on my own authority. He who speaks on his own authority … seeks his own glory. But he who seeks the glory of the one who sent him … he is true, and in him there is no falsehood. Do not judge by appearances, but rather judge with right judgement.*

In other words … use your brain.

*And the reading concludes … if you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth shall set you free*.

The truth shall set you free. True … but who’s truth ? The world of disinformation is alive and well, in politics, and equally, in religion. *Humanity, says mystic theologian Richard Rohr, is a perfect rhyme for what Christianity, tying to express the inexpressible, calls the Holy Trinity. This human dance we’re all in reflects a mysterious divine dance, one that we notice on our best days. Finding that sweet spot, where contemporary science meets ancient mysticism, and theology meets poetry, Rohr’s book The Divine Dance sketches a beautiful choreography for a life well-lived. In our joy, or our pain, true life is always relational, a flow, a dance … and was always meant to be.*

These were penned not by Rohr … but by U2’s lead singer. So thanks Bono.

Continuing the forewords to the book*, The Divine Dance*, Brian McLaren noted:
 More and more people are struggling with conventional understandings of God, like the big white-haired guy on the throne, with a long beard and a fistful of swords and lightning bolts by which you or your enemies might be smitten at any moment if you don’t think or act correctly. For many, the concepts of Trinity simply triples their God-problems. But in The Divine Dance, Richard Rohr and Mike Morrell explore the Trinity as a pathway beyond problematic understandings of God.

So let’s have a read from Richard’s book … The Divine Dance.

What he’s saying is that we have to open our minds, and as Christ said, use real judgement … and be truthful in how you use your brain.

We have to learn to think, a reason most of us are Liberal Catholics free to interpret as we see it resonating in us … and so not wedded to mainstream thinking … and as we will uncover in the Intents during the weeks ahead, learn to use discernment, understand discriminating factors, and use of judgement.

Sadly, we limit the Trinity if we focus on the man Jesus, awesome as He was. But we need to understand that He was and is, both God and Man, at one and the same time. So what he experienced on earth, we can expect to as well. Hopefully not being executed in such a ghastly manner … but rather like John … growing old, and in my case, somewhat disgracefully.

Because Jesus was man and God, we need to understand the divinity in the Christ … and that such divinity resides also in us, and therefore we ourselves are divine in nature. And for that reason, if for no other, no matter who we are, no matter what religious pathway we take in our life, we are all destined to return to the One-Source, that One Initiator … from whom emanates this divinity that is in all of us, no matter our structured faith system, or none.

So as we come to the end of the Season of Trinity, we need to develop an understanding that before Jesus was … the Christ is. As He said … before Abraham was … I am. But he was not talking about Himself in a physical sense … no … this was the Christ within. The Christ that pervades the furthest corners of the universe as we understand it … and then the rest of creation that we cannot.

A lack of appreciation of these truths … become the untruths that we need to dispel, the ignorance we need to overcome. Once we do this, we don’t just let the Christ into our lives, He brings the rest of them with Him … and we receive the fullness of the Trinity.

And I think we can leave it there.