

**Reflection on the Gospel-Trinity Sunday Year C
(John 16:12-15)**

-Veronica Lawson RSM

The opening sentence of today's gospel touches something very deep in human experience. Jesus tells his disciples: "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now." In John's gospel, Jesus is depicted as sensitive to the anguish of his friends and to their limited capacity to absorb the enormity of what was happening to him and to them. There was only so much they could "bear" as the inevitability of Jesus' death dawned on them. They *will* come to understand who he is and what he has taught them, but only through the power of God's "Spirit of truth" who will guide them into "all the truth". This has a particular resonance at a time when "truth-telling" is so often compromised in political circles.

As we think back on our own lives and tell stories of the past, we realize how little we understood of what was happening in our world and in our own lives at the time of the events we recount. We become wiser with the knowledge of hindsight, even if we never fully understand. As Christians, we credit any insight and understanding we may have to the power of God's Spirit at work in our lives. We believe in the Triune God and, along with the whole Earth community, we are caught up into a wonderful dynamism of Trinitarian life.

No one image can capture the mystery of God's dynamic Trinitarian existence. Since God is neither male nor female, it is important to remember that the traditional male language of Father, Son and Spirit is one way of imaging the Trinity and is not to be absolutized or taken as a literal description of God who is three in one.

Perichoresis, a Greek term suggestive of dancing or of figures interweaving, is one of the earliest and probably one of the most striking images used to explain this Trinitarian life of God. The life that is in God is three and yet one in a totally harmonious dance of equals. The wonder is that we are invited to join the dance. Trinity Sunday is the day that we set aside to celebrate who God is in Godself and who God is in relation to everything that exists. We celebrate the nearness of the Triune God who draws us as participants into the dance of life and love. The Spirit of truth guides us "into all the truth". We continue to listen to the Spirit so that we might understand more fully the "things that are to come" and the relatedness we are called to live. The dance of Trinitarian love casts out hatred and enmity and wanton destruction. It calls us to live in harmony with one another and with the whole of the Earth community and, inspired by the Spirit of Truth, to reclaim truth in public life.