**Psalm 111**

*1. Alleluia. I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart,*

*in the company of the faithful and in the congregation.*

*2. The works of the Lord are great, sought out by all who delight in them.*

*3. His work is full of majesty and honour and his righteousness endures for ever.*

*4. He appointed a memorial for his marvellous deeds;*

*the Lord is gracious and full of compassion.*

*5. He gave food to those who feared him; he is ever mindful of his covenant.*

*6. He showed the people the power of his works in giving them the heritage of the*

*nations.*

*7. The works of his hands are truth and justice; all his commandments are sure.*

*8. They stand fast for ever and ever; they are done in truth and equity.*

*9. He sent redemption to his people; he commanded his covenant for ever;*

*holy and awesome is his name.*

*10. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;*

*a good understanding have those who live by it; his praise endures for ever.*

**Refrain**

The works of the Lord are truth and justice:

**he is gracious and full of compassion.**

Psalm 111 is a hymn, in which the mood is set by the opening Alleluia in verse 1, which means ‘Praise the Lord’. An individual offers public thanksgiving for the works of the Lord. (vv.1, 2, ‘The works of the Lord are great, sought out by all who delight in them.’) Here are revealed God’s majestic power (v.3,’his work is full of majesty and honour,’), his justice, grace and mercy. (v.4, ‘He appointed a memorial for his marvellous deeds; the Lord is gracious and full of compassion.’)

In the second section, the psalmist rehearses the Exodus events, through which Israel came into being, the miracles of food in the desert, when the manna and quails came down. (v.5, ‘He gave food to those who feared him; he is ever mindful of his covenant.’)

Then the psalmist mentions the conquest of Canaan. (v.6, ‘He showed the people the power of his works in giving them the heritage of the nations.’)

The people were given the commandments (the law), which required steadfastness and integrity. (vv. 7,8, ‘The works of his hands are truth and justice; all his commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever; they are done in truth and equity.’)

By doing all this, God redeemed his people and established a covenant. A covenant is a binding agreement, which demands acceptance by both parties, so the demand was that the people remain faithful. By doing this, God’s name (that is, his presence) is awesome and inspiring. (v.9, ‘He sent redemption to his people; he commanded his covenant for ever; holy and awesome is his name.’)

In the last verse, the psalm is seen to be a wisdom psalm. (‘The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have those who live by it.’) This is the basic doctrine of Israel’s wisdom teachers. The characteristic of wisdom was the ability to deal with issues of practical life. Understanding meant being able to work out courses of action to be followed, and the source of this was reverence for God, the fear of the Lord. The psalm ends, as it began, with praise.

Psalm 111 is especially uplifting, because it focuses, as we do on Trinity Sunday, on the character of God, his faithfulness, justice and compassion. It gives us the chance to thank God for all that he gives us and what he does for us. It helps us to look away from ourselves and our concerns for a while and to be raised beyond ourselves, which we need, if we are to put things into perspective. Of course, we need to pray about the world and things, which concern us and cause us anxiety, but sometimes it is necessary to take a moment to think about the nature of God as revealed in history and in our present world.

Psalm 111 helps us to be positive, rather than negative, and to find joy in what we do and in the world around us, even though there are many problems, which we face.

So, our worship is important, as it helps us to focus on the nature and continual presence of God, especially in the Eucharist, when we receive his life in the bread and wine. Jesus came at Christmas as Emmanuel, God is with us. Perhaps we need to try to be more aware of God’s presence in our world, sharing our lives, to help us to put it all into perspective.

**Prayer**

Almighty and eternal God,

you have revealed yourself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit,

and live and reign in the prefect unity of love:

hold us firm in this faith,

that we may know you in all your ways

and evermore rejoice in your eternal glory,

who are three Persons yet one God,

now and for ever.

**Amen.**

(Post Communion Collect, Trinity Sunday)