

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF REVELATION

I, John, saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, with the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm earth and sea, saying, ‘Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.’

And I heard the number of the sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand, sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel. After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, ‘Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!’

And all the angels were standing round the throne and round the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, saying, ‘Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour and power and might be to our God for ever and ever! Amen.’

Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, ‘Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?’

I said to him, ‘Sir, you know.’ And he said to me, ‘These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation.

They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.’

THE WORD OF THE LORD

THE RESPONSE TO THE PSALM IS:

Such are the people who seek your face, O Lord.

The LORD'S is the earth and its fullness,
the world, and those who dwell in it.

It is he who set it on the seas;
on the rivers he made it firm.

Such are the people who seek your face, O Lord.

Who shall climb the mountain of the LORD?

Who shall stand in his holy place?

The clean of hands and pure of heart,
whose soul is not set on vain things.

Such are the people who seek your face, O Lord.

Blessings from the LORD shall he receive,
and right reward from the God who saves him.

Such are the people who seek him,
who seek the face of the God of Jacob.

Such are the people who seek your face, O Lord.

A READING FROM THE FIRST LETTER OF JOHN

Beloved: See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are.

The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

Beloved: I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, for God gave us a spirit not of fear, but of power and love and self-control.

Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God. Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.

THE WORD OF THE LORD.

THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia.

Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, says the Lord, and I will give you rest.

Alleluia.

A READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING
TO LUKE

At that time:

Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

‘Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.

Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.’

The Gospel of the Lord.

THE REFLECTION

If I was to try and sum up the new Testament I would use these words:

Blessed are those who put their **trust in God** above all.

Blessed are those who feel **sympathy for those who are suffering and are gentle in words and actions.**

Blessed are those **willing to suffer for what is right**

Blessed are those who are **generous with treasure, time and talents.**

Blessed are those who **act with a clear conscience.**

Pope Francis said that evangelisation is living like that, and when people ask you why, you can explain the Good news of Jesus Christ.

I think the saints would agree, Winefride trusting God when she was assaulted, Ignatius and his companions willing to live and preach to all corners of the world, Patrick tramping across Ireland and Mary, asked to be the Mother of the Son of God.

But they did it in company, Joseph looking after Mary and Jesus, Patrick educated and developed in Wales...Ignatius with Francis Xavier and companions, the apostles engaging with challenges like St Paul wanting a universal Catholic church when the others were comfortable with their idea of God's people who followed the law of Moses. Carlo Acutis with the resources and companionship he found on the internet.

These words can be used as a means to examine our own lives, I now have them on my desk and where I say the final prayers of the day with the screen finally off. I have just finished reading "I swear", the autobiography by a man describing Tourette's, recognising his condition will never go he has to live with it and eventually finds gentle understanding and acceptance. All of us live with a legacy of what Evolution has recognised as the struggle for survival and the bible calls original sin, an imperfect or fallen human nature which is

never going to depart so the struggle for saintliness will be one of growth, self regard and acceptance.

Often the final gospel to be said over us at a funeral is Jesus telling us he is the Way, the truth and the light, perhaps we can hope to say thank you for finding the way by your light and following it in truth. And hope he might say to us, “Blessed are you for finding it and thank you for keeping to it, I appreciate your gift of faith. “