A READING FROM THE BOOK OF REVELLATION 7:2-4, 9-14

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:

Ps 24(23):1-2. 3-4b. 5-6. ℟ cf. 6

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.

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 MATTHEW

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 meek, 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 even 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.'

REFLECTION ON THE READINGS

I would like to ask Simon the apostle what he did after Pentecost, his feast day was on the 28th October, according to Legend he went as far as Persia preaching and converting until his death. Like so many of the apostles it is right to assume they went East, and south of Jerusalem to modern Syria, Iraq, Egypt, and beyond. None of them wrote letters as memorable as Paul's whose life and adventures were written down by Luke who had a careful investigative mind, he probably met Jesus' mother Mary which is how we have so rich a story of the nativity from her. If you have really good eyesight you can see in this church; he is carrying a picture of her.

I would like to meet St Cecilia who kept her house open on Sunday evenings in Rome for the Christians to gather for mass. She lived in

Rome as did St Philip Neri whose sense of faith and fun attracted many followers, who kept his memory and their descendant eventually founded schools, as did Angela Merici and her followers in Brescia *near Milan*

The great Saints like Ignatius, Edmund Campion, St John Paul III I think would be intimidating, but Francis of Assisi had a gentle way with everyone he met. The great intellectuals like Newman in England or Thomas Aquinas in Paris - I would be out of my depth in thinking I understood everything they had written.

Most Saints would be easy to approach, quietly doing things well according to their talents, making a difference in those they met, Vincent de Paul supporting prisoners, Louise de Marrillac running a safe home for the many unwanted orphans and sick people. They lived in hope of being called to share God's kingdom which as better than they had hoped, in the goodness and kindness of the living God.

John's vision was of a great number, impossible to count of those who had lived out the blessed teaching of Jesus, as they understood chapter 5 of Matthews gospel and lived it out.

Beatitudes, read it yourselves and try to think how you could become a Christian

Trust in God, more than anything else,

Be compassionate to those who suffer,

Be sensitive with what you do,

Be kind to those in need and willing to put yourself out for justice and peacemaking.

Act with a clear conscience to be at peace with yourself

THE CLEARLY BEST KINDNESS IS ACTIVE AND CLEAR