

Martha tries to restrain Jesus from viewing the decomposing corpse of his friend (v. 39). Jesus says to her: did I not tell you that if you believed you would see God's power to end death? God, Father and Son, bring Lazarus back to physical life. Jesus verbalizes his thanks to the Father as he tells the unbelieving "crowd" (v. 42) that he is sent by the Father. On Jesus' command, Lazarus emerges, still wrapped in burial cloths. © 1996-2016 Chris Haslam

~ Notices ~

Concerts – Two further concerts are scheduled for this Autumn

27th November 7.30pm – **Regina Nathan** – ticket details to be confirmed.

11th December – **Helen Hancock** – A Christmas concert - ticket details to be confirmed.

Prayers - If you have any particular issue that you would like to be prayed for, do please email me on frkevinobrien@me.com or call me on 065 672 4721.

Advent Course – For those who remember back to February of 2020, we had started the course 'Living the Questions', and we rudely interrupted by the pandemic. Depending upon interest expressed, I intend to start again this November as an Advent course, to be held in the parish room of St Columba's (rather larger for social distancing than the Rectory). Please indicate on the sign-up sheet whether you would like to join us – we can always come back to the Rectory in the New Year.

Christmas – Whilst the Christmas Tree Festival cannot proceed this year (although we need to start planning for Christmas 2022 – it is too important to lose) we need to start planning and preparing for Christmas celebrations for 2021. A Carol service of some kind will be possible, whether it features a small ensemble singing, or full congregation with masks, or musicians playing instrumental versions. I am asking either for volunteers to play or for recommendations of friends/family who might play as part of a team of musicians for a 'Carols around the Christmas Tree' event.

Website: clareanglicans.ie

YouTube: www.youtube.com/c/clareanglicans

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All Saints & All Souls (Year B) 2021

Readings and Hymns

Collect: God of holiness, your glory is proclaimed in every age: as we rejoice in the faith of your saints, inspire us to follow their example with boldness and joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Suggested Hymns: *In conjunction with the online service you might like to view these hymns on YouTube - with internet links and lyrics so that you can sing along:*

- 1) For all the saints
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1OaBgaMcOvM>
- 2) Lift up your heads, you mighty gates
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fTYDOfyW734>
- 3) Jerusalem the golden
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mwbAE9uZk84>
- 4) How shall I sing that majesty
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kOI-YWWpEXk>

Isaiah 25:6-9

On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples

a feast of rich food, a feast of well-matured wines,
of rich food filled with marrow, of well-matured wines
strained clear.

And he will destroy on this mountain

the shroud that is cast over all peoples,
the sheet that is spread over all nations;
he will swallow up death for ever.

Then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces,
and the disgrace of his people he will take away
from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken.

It will be said on that day,

Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he
might save us.

This is the Lord for whom we have waited;
let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

Psalms 24

The earth is the Lord's and all that fills it, ♦
the compass of the world and all who dwell therein.

For he has founded it upon the seas ♦
and set it firm upon the rivers of the deep.

'Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord, ♦
or who can rise up in his holy place?'

'Those who have clean hands and a pure heart, ♦
who have not lifted up their soul to an idol,
nor sworn an oath to a lie;

'They shall receive a blessing from the Lord, ♦
a just reward from the God of their salvation.'

Such is the company of those who seek him, ♦
of those who seek your face, O God of Jacob.

Lift up your heads, O gates;

be lifted up, you everlasting doors; ♦
and the King of glory shall come in.

'Who is the King of glory?' ♦

'The Lord, strong and mighty,
the Lord who is mighty in battle.'

Lift up your heads, O gates;

be lifted up, you everlasting doors; ♦
and the King of glory shall come in.

'Who is this King of glory?' ♦

'The Lord of hosts,
he is the King of glory.'

Revelation 21: 1-6a

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

‘See, the home of God is among mortals.

He will dwell with them;

they will be his peoples,

and God himself will be with them;

he will wipe every tear from their eyes.

Death will be no more;

mourning and crying and pain will be no more,

for the first things have passed away.’

And the one who was seated on the throne said, ‘See, I am making all things new.’ Also he said, ‘Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.’ Then he said to me, ‘It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life.

John 11: 32-44

When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, ‘Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.’ When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. He said, ‘Where have you laid him?’ They said to him, ‘Lord, come and see.’ Jesus began to weep. So the Jews said, ‘See how he loved him!’ But some of them said, ‘Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?’

Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. Jesus said, ‘Take away the stone.’ Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, ‘Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead for four days.’ Jesus said to her, ‘Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?’ So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upwards and said, ‘Father, I thank you for having heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.’ When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, ‘Lazarus, come out!’ The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, ‘Unbind him, and let him go.’

Commentary

Isaiah 25:6-9

In accounts of the Last Supper, Jesus says that he will not drink wine again “until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God” (see Mark 14:25). Earthly language is inadequate for expressing heavenly notions. Chapters 24 to 27 of Isaiah are a prophecy about the end-times; our reading is a description of the celestial banquet to which Jesus refers. (Other ancient Near East cultures also use a banquet as a description of the final happiness of the godly.) Chapter 24 begins with the announcement of the destruction of the earth. There will be total upheaval of the social order (24:2). God will then destroy the earth. Most people will have broken the covenant with him, so he will cause them to “suffer for their guilt” (24:6) and die. Only a godly remnant will remain. The earth will be a gloomy place (24:7-13) but then the survivors will praise God’s name (24:14-16a). “On that day” (24:21) God will imprison rebellious angels and the kings of the earth for a long time and then punish them (24:22). “... the Lord of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem ...” (24:23). As the seventy elders beheld God’s glory at Sinai, so Israel’s elders will again see him enthroned in his majesty.

Then “on this mountain” (25:6), at Jerusalem, God will provide a banquet “for all peoples”, for the godly of all nations, with food and the wine of which Jesus speaks. The dead are pictured as being covered with a “shroud” (25:7) or “sheet”; this will be removed when God swallows up, does away with, “death forever”. God’s kingdom will be established. In eternal life, he will “wipe away” (25:8) one of the roots of all misery, our mortality, and he will remove the collective shame of breaking the covenant. The remnant, the godly, will acknowledge “our God” (25:9), for whom we have waited and who has saved us; let us “rejoice in his salvation”.

Psalms 24

This psalm is based on a Canaanite myth which tells of the divine conquest of the unruly forces of chaos. The psalmist has transformed it into a hymn of praise to God, the victorious creator, followed by a liturgy on entering the Temple. In question-and-answer form, it was probably sung antiphonally, as the Ark was borne to the Temple. Vv. 1-2 acknowledge God as creator. V. 3 asks: who will be admitted to the Temple? Vv. 4-6 give the answer: those who are pure, do not worship false gods, and do not harm others with false oaths. They will be blessed by God, with prosperity. In vv. 7-10, the pilgrims identify God in terms traditionally associated with the Ark: he is “King of glory”, the “Lord of hosts” (v. 10), the war hero of Israel (v. 8b). The “doors” (v. 9) are those between the outer court and the sanctuary of the Temple. Perhaps a priest asks: “Who is the King of glory?” (v. 8) from within, and the people answer from the court. (The “heads”, v. 7, are the lintels of the doors.) God dwells in the sanctuary.

Revelation 21:1-6a

This book is “the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1:1) made known through John. It is prophecy which reveals secrets of heaven and earth. Our reading is from John’s record of his vision of the end-times. He has told of the destruction of the old city, Babylon (code name for Rome) and of the old heaven and earth (20:11); the ungodly have been driven off to punishment (20:15). Only the godly, a remnant, remain. Isaiah 65:17-25 and 66:22 predict that all creation will be renewed, freed from imperfections and transformed by the glory of God.

Now John sees the new creation. The “sea” (21:1), a symbol of turbulence, unrest and chaos, is no more. He sees “the new Jerusalem” (21:2), probably not made with bricks and mortar, “holy”, of divine origin, beautiful and lovely as a “bride”. (Marriage is a symbol of the intimate union between the exalted Christ and the godly remnant. Some see the city as the church, set apart for God’s use in the world.)

John hears “a loud voice” (21:3) interpreting 21:2: God again comes to “dwell” (be present spiritually) with “his peoples”. Sorrow, death and pain – characteristics that made the old earth appear to be enslaved to sin – will disappear (21:4). God, “seated on the throne”, speaks in vv. 5-6: he will do everything described in 21:1-4; he is sovereign over all that happens in human history. (“Alpha” and “Omega” are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, so God encompasses all.) God will give the gift of eternal life (“water”, 21:6b) to all who seek him.

John 11:32-44

Lazarus, Mary’s brother, has died. Martha has told Jesus that he would not have died had Jesus been present, but that the Father will grant whatever Jesus asks. Jesus has said to her: “Your brother will rise again” (v. 23), which she takes to refer to the general resurrection Jews expected at the end of time. Jesus has answered: “I am the resurrection and the life” (v. 25); even though a believer dies physically, he or she will live on as a person. She has added: “I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world” (v. 27). Now Mary repeats Martha’s earlier assertion (in v. 21). Jesus is stirred with indignation, probably at the sorrow death brings. Touched by the pain of those he loves, he weeps: he shares that pain in some real way.