

From the Rector's Study, the Rev. Bryce Sangster  
St. James, Roseneath  
Sunday, June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Decoration Sunday, Roseneath  
Revelation 21:1-7, Psalm 23 Sung, John 14:1-14

Thinking of Jesus as the Alpha and the Omega the beginning and the end. What this means. Jesus is involved in our lives all the way through touches us perhaps almost every day. This is moving us perhaps to a new heaven. And I wonder if those who have gone before us and we pay our respects to today have gotten there already. At least to the old heaven, whatever that means.

Hopefully they can say that from the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm, your goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

But the last line of the Revelation passage: *Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children.* Is cause for pause and concern. Can you guess which world I am referring to?

Conquer. This sounds like survival of the fittest. And what is the next verse? But not the cowardly, the faithless, *the polluted, the murderers, the fornicators, the sorcerers, the idolaters, and all liars.*

So, I started looking at different translations of the passage. And I came across the word overcome instead of conquer, and this gives me the sensation that this is about what is happening within ourselves and not against each other.

This all connects to the concept of relationship and how we treat each other.

And the second part of John's Gospel today: that we can ask anything that the father be glorified through the son or in the son. This means to me that what we ask for has a benefit not only to us but to others and is following God's plan in some form going forward. This is not about selfish wishes which can separate us from God and each other. I am reminded of what a colleague once said to me, that we often confuse wants with needs.

None of us are perfect, but those we remember today are those in relationship and like us navigated through the trials and tribulations of life. In their relationship with God and others whom they loved and who were strangers.

And God is quoted in Revelation, I will be their God and they will be my children.

Amen

The Lord bless *you* and watch over *you*,  
the Lord make his face shine upon *you*  
and be gracious to *you*,  
the Lord look kindly on *you*  
and give *you* peace;  
and the blessing ...