

From the Rector's Study, the Rev. Bryce Sangster
Sunday, October 31 All Saints
Wisdom 3:1-9, Psalm 24, Revelation 21:1-6a. John 11:32-44

In Revelation: *"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, and I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end."*

That is the challenge for us, calling us out of our comfort zone to a new and exciting reality, but it could be in the ordinary and we just miss it.

The two phrases of Jesus in today's Gospel, point us to the new heaven and earth, *"Lazarus come out!"* and *"Unbind him and let him go."*

I have said before saints are those who can live with their feet in seeming two worlds, they are able to enjoy living in the present more fully than most of us, and yet still strive and work toward the Kingdom of God in the now.

Whereas most of us are almost solely on one side or the other, either strive to live in this world and navigate thorough it with some element of peace and harmony for self or are concerned about some issue that is not right and focus solely on that with anger and with little apparent joy in life in the present.

Saints are those who can enjoy life in the now and still strive for a better world with passion and commitment and maybe they are able to do this more fully than the rest of us. Maybe this connects to today as well, because the mystics talk about being awake and aware. They may be referring to being unbound by the concerns and worries of this life and can enjoy living in the present without worrying so much about themselves, their security and fame and fame and fortune. They can then focus on and enter in with others experiencing both pain and joy.

I thought of this while out for my walk last Saturday. Twice while I was crossing the street on the cross walk, a car turned toward me and stopped short of hitting me. No neither was on their cell phone, but still.....

I have been just as distracted on other occasions. Distracted by what?

If we are not living in the present, then when or where? Either thinking about the past or the future, remembering something or looking forward to or worrying about something which may happen in the future.

Jesus shows us his ability to be in the present, which is also about focusing on the other, looking beyond himself, and not on himself.

What is the shortest verse in the bible?

In today's Gospel, Jesus wept.

Jesus, at that moment was able to think of Lazarus, Mary and Martha, and not just himself.

Part of this is moving more and more to letting go of worrying and focusing on ourselves and others in our relationships and beyond.

I don't think any of us think of ourselves as saints, but I don't think it is helpful to think of saints as all that different from ourselves, because when we do, we think they have something we can never attain. Yes, we are not saints, but to end there is to miss the opportunity to ask ourselves is there something those who are saints or saintlier than ourselves can teach us about our own spiritual journeys?

Amen