

Alleluia! Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed! Alleluia!
Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father
and our Risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

My dear beloved flock, the text for our meditation this morning is the Epistle Lesson of the Revelation according to Saint John, the twenty-first chapter verses one through seven.

Boys and Girls, How are you doing this morning? I pray that you are doing well today. Have you ever heard of a movie titled *Aladdin*? It was one of my favorite movies when I was your age. It is about this boy that does not have a family. He does not have a mom or dad. He does everything he can to find a whole new world in which to live, to find someone who loves him. Aladdin's life is broken and he wants a new life. When something is old and broken what do you do with it? You would throw it away, right? It is broken. It does not work anymore. You toss it away and get something new. In our text for today, we see what God does with old things. We see that He does not destroy them but makes them new again. That He will make a whole new world. How does God do that? Ponder this question, as you hear the rest of the sermon. You may go back to your seats and those who love you.

Old has passed away, New has come

In our reading, Saint John sees the old earth and heaven dissolve and pass away. They are no longer there. They are replaced by a new heaven and a new earth. Does this mean that everything we see here and now will be completely and totally destroyed? That there will be no more buildings, no more plants? That everything will look like something out of a post-apocalyptic wasteland? No, God does not utterly destroy the world. Rather, everything will be restored to perfection again.

The voice of the Father, sitting on the throne declares, “Behold I am making all things new!” then He says, “It is done!”

All things are made new again, here and now. This can be hard for our minds to understand. Everywhere we look at this present moment we see death and pain. There is still wars and killings. There is still arguments and anger. We still struggle against our sins and the temptations of the devil. How can everything already be made new?

New in and through JC

It is made new because of Who is making all things new. It is the Father. Notice the tense of the Father’s statement. This statement is in the present tense, “*I am making everything new.*” This is the consummation of God’s work of renewal and redemption, having *begun* here and now in our present time. Everything has been made new because of the work of the everlasting Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. What did Jesus do? He came down out of heaven for us. What does Saint John see? He sees the Holy City, the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven! Our restoration is not a matter of us ascending to God, but of God descending to us! God entered into His creation, took on our flesh. “It is done!” John must have been reminded of a word he had heard years earlier: “It is finished.” That’s what Jesus said on the cross, as he was hanging there, dying for the sins of the world. And because Jesus did die for those sins, your sins and mine, our debt has been paid, the goal has been reached, and the deal has been sealed, good as gold. Jesus’ “It is finished” on the cross guarantees the “It is done” in the new Jerusalem. And the proof is in the resurrection of Christ, when he conquered the grave and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. “Because he lives, we shall live also.”

Jesus takes the old trash of our sins. Instead of destroying us as we deserve, He gives us His perfect righteousness. In Christ we are perfectly restored here and now. Our relationship with God is made perfect once again because of the shedding of Christ's blood. Thus, why there is no longer any sea, not a reference to physical water but in terms of separation from God. There is no more separation. He is our God and we are His Sons and Daughters because of His only-begotten Son's death and resurrection from the dead.

Sons and Daughters of God forever!

We are God's Sons and Daughters made new in and through Jesus Christ our Lord. He has made us new creations in the waters of Holy Baptism. There, God has restored us and made us His, now and forever. At this present moment, we endure. We endure our sins, we endure our pain, knowing that because of Jesus Christ, there will be a whole new world. A new heaven and a new earth. The holy city, new Jerusalem. A holy people, a new you, and a new us, God with us forever. Until that blessed day arrives, hold fast to the faith that you have been given. Your sins are forgiven in Christ. You are His new creations now and forever. The old you, dead and gone, that the new you may live now and forever. A new identity, a new you, shown in your thoughts, words, and deeds to those around us. That we may proclaim the wonder of Him who has made us new forever and ever.

May the Peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard and keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.