

Psalm 30

[Worship]

1 I will extol you, O LORD, for you have drawn me up, and did not let my foes rejoice over me. 2 O LORD my God, I cried to you for help, and you have healed me. 3 O LORD, you brought up my soul from Sheol, restored me to life from among those gone down to the Pit. 4 Sing praises to the LORD, O you his faithful ones, and give thanks to his holy name. 5 For his anger is but for a moment; his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning. 6 As for me, I said in my prosperity, "I shall never be moved." 7 By your favor, O LORD, you had established me as a strong mountain; you hid your face; I was dismayed. 8 To you, O LORD, I cried, and to the LORD I made supplication: 9 "What profit is there in my death, if I go down to the Pit? Will the dust praise you? Will it tell of your faithfulness? 10 Hear, O LORD, and be gracious to me! O LORD, be my helper!" 11 You have turned my mourning into dancing; you have taken off my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, 12 so that my soul may praise you and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks to you forever.

Consider:

Faith bears witness to abrupt, transformative newness that it cannot explain. It can only narrate what it has seen and heard.

[Words]

The gospel reading turns on Peter's assertion, "It is the Lord!" (John 21.7). Jesus shows up where least expected, and everything is changed. The life-giving power of God has the capacity, always again on exhibit, to work newness where newness seems impossible. Our readings provide three "case studies" of the gift of Easter newness.

In Psalm 30, the psalm tells of the turn from mourning to dancing, from sad clothes into joy clothes (v.11). Joy comes in the morning ... after long weeping (v.5)!

In the Acts narrative, the living Lord confronts Saul the persecutor: "I am Jesus" (v.9). Nobody, surely not Ananias, expected that Saul could be transformed into a daring follower of "the Way." But he is! He is given back his sight for his new vocation.

The lyric of Revelation 5 offers a scene of all creatures gathered around the throne of God. What a song they sing! It is about the "slaughtered Lamb" (crucified Jesus) become the enthroned Lamb (Risen Lord), endowed with power, wealth, wisdom, might, honor, glory, and blessing (v.12-13).

The readings provide a remarkable inventory concerning God's transformative power: Saul to Paul, slain Lamb to enthroned Lamb. These texts invite us to ponder God's gifts of newness among us: new selves, new church, new world. Gifts beyond our despairing.

[Scripture]

Revelation 5.11-14

11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels surrounding the throne and the living creatures and the elders; they numbered myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, 12 singing with full voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slaughtered to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!" 13 Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, singing, "To the one seated on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!" 14 And the four living creatures said, "Amen!" And the elders fell down and worshiped.

Question:

In what ways have you been transformed by the Risen Christ?

Are you returning to familiar fishing, or tending sheep?

Also, read for yourself this week,
John 21.1-19 & Acts 9.1-20