



ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

"Our mission is to bring the good news of Jesus Christ's love to our entire community through traditional Anglo-Catholic worship, fellowship, outreach, and Christian formation."

Our Vision: *"We strive to be a haven of healing, reconciliation, joy and peace in service to our wider community and beyond, so that our example in prayer and practice may reflect Christ's love for us all."*

THIS SUNDAY — February 20 & Beyond

"The Christian Hope"



The New Testament's main theme is our hope as followers of Christ. The message in the Gospels and the rest of the writings all point to one main theme: the fullness of life that Jesus has made possible for us through His self-giving.

This new life is depicted as the resurrected life, of which Jesus' resurrection is the first fruit. It is described with adjectives such as *new, glorious, full, and abundant*. It is also depicted as a life lived in close communion with the Father and the Son, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

But what is a resurrected body like? And what kind of life are we hoping for in this new body?

The New Testament writers do not give us many details about these matters, and those of us who rely solely on the witness of scripture prefer not to elaborate on these points.

What we usually do is to use the same terms that are listed above to refer to the Christian hope, and if asked more directly, as it happened to me when I was in a supermarket wearing my clerical shirt the other day, we usually say that we have full trust in God's love and that we are sure that God will surprise us with a wonderful life that we can only dimly foresee now.

There is truth in that statement, of course. But the fact is that we human beings are curious by nature and would like to know more.

This is not new. In his first letter to the Corinthians, Chapter 15, Paul gives some answers to their inquiries about the resurrected body. Let us take a look at what he affirms.

The first thing he points out is that what is buried is different from what resurrects. He uses the analogy of the seed and the plant to make this clear.

The body that dies is perishable, the one that resurrects is imperishable, so it can no longer decay or die.

The resurrected body is also glorious and powerful. And it is not a physical body, but a spiritual one. It is not from the earth but from heaven. The word *heaven* was used by the New Testament writers to refer to the godly spiritual realms.

But notice that Paul does not say that the resurrected life is bodiless. He explicitly speaks of a body. It is an embodied life. But this body is different. He calls it a *spiritual body*. He clearly states that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, because they are perishable.

When the Gospels depict the resurrected Jesus, it is clear that there is a body that can be touched and can even eat. Jesus' resurrected body even shows the marks of the crucifixion. But there are also hints that this body is somewhat different in some of the passages. Jesus cannot always be recognized immediately by His followers. And He seems to be able to pass through closed doors, and also disappear all of a sudden, as in the passage of the two disciples walking to Emmaus.

Jesus' body is also depicted as "ascending to the Father", although it is not possible to explain how this could happen. The fact is that what Luke depicts is a bodily union with the Creator, not a bodiless fusion in the spirit.

As to what kind of relationships we will have with others in the resurrected life, there are few indications in the New Testament. One of them is when Jesus answers the tricky question that the Sadducees pose about the woman who had seven husbands who died in succession and ask Jesus which of them would be her husband when she resurrects. They did not believe in resurrection and posed this question to ridicule this belief.

To this Jesus replies that in the resurrected life people will not marry or be given out in marriage, but would be like the angels in heaven.

It has been inferred from this that in the resurrected life universal love precludes any kind of closer relationship between two persons. However, we need to be aware that the institution of marriage in Jesus' time was most of the time a contract where love was not the primary reason.

So there may be universal love without the exclusion of some more intimate relationships between people. One does not necessarily preclude the other, as we saw in Jesus' relationships with His followers. Three of them were his closer friends among the twelve he chose to be his inner core group.

There is not much else that we can infer about the resurrected life from what the New Testament writers tell us, but for those who are curious, these few hints might give them some insight.

All in all, even if there is not much that we can know in advance, the Christian hope is still the greatest of hopes, simply because our God, who gave Himself in loving sacrifice for us, will give us nothing short of the best of lives to be lived and shared in communion with Him, with one another and with the whole of creation.

Fr. Carlos E. Expósito, Rector

Readings for this Sunday – The Seventh Sunday after The Epiphany

Genesis 45:3-11, 21-28 Psalm 37:3-10 1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50 Luke 6:27-38

CALENDAR

Note: We are worshipping in our historic church. The service will also be on Zoom. The service time is 10am. Tuesday Noon Mass and Friday Morning Prayer are held in All Saints' St. Mary Chapel.

SUNDAY The Seventh Sunday after the Epiphany

10:00am Mass in All Saints' Church

Join Zoom Meeting from our web site at www.allsaintschurch.org

Recording of Mass available before noon at www.allsaintschurch.org

Christian Formation and First Communion Instruction for Children

Ages 5-12 in the Parish Hall from 10:00am-10:45am

TUESDAY Noon Mass in St. Mary Chapel

THURSDAY Spanish Class 1:00pm to 3:00pm in the Flower Room. Taught by Fr. Carlos.

FRIDAY 10:00am Morning Prayer in St. Mary's Chapel

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OUR CORE VALUES:

- Welcoming strangers like old friends
- Embracing the Anglo-Catholic tradition
- Being dependable members of a caring community
- Respecting each other's differences
- Being faithful stewards of God's gift
- Remembering that God loves everyone unconditionally

An Anglo-Catholic Parish in the Episcopal Diocese of San Diego
www.allsaintschurch.org