Third Sunday of Easter

Acts 5:27-32, 40-41

Psalm 30

Revelation 5:11-14

John 21:1-19

Some notes on the readings.

In our first reading, all the apostles are brought into the Sanhedrin – the religious court of the People. The officials demand that the Apostles cease and desist their preaching about Jesus - his passion, death and resurrection. The Apostles reply that the Christian message takes priority over human laws. In today’s world what situations in the secular world must be set aside so that the Christian message can be proclaimed? What Christian message trumps the laws of the land.

From our psalm, can we not overcome the distress we may be feeling by knowing in our hearts that God has our back? So much so that we can sing “You have changed my mourning into dancing”? Be it our sins that are set aside because of God’s good will? Or to know that God is our helper in all things, even stressful ones? If we feel we are in the pits, can we not rejoice that God is there with us?

In our second reading, Apocalyptic literature deals with great, marvelous, amazing ideas. John hears a choir of angels praising the Lamb that was slain, now full of power and wisdom and strength. John also hears all the creatures of creation cry out in praise of the Lamb. Thus the message of the Lamb once slain now in glory goes out to the heavens and the earth. The earth and all that dwell in it are worthy of the message of the Resurrection. Did you know that May 17th is designated International Endangered Species Day? There is a pamphlet at the break of the church that explains. It even has a call to worship:

Let us worship God together. How many are your works, Lord! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. You call your creation “very good.”

It is good, and we rejoice!

Come Leviathan who frolics, beasts that prowl, and every creeping thing that creeps! When you send your Spirit, Lord, they are created, and you renew the face of the ground. Every creature gives you praise.

It is good, and rejoice.

Let us celebrate the harmony of all God’s creatures that sing in the choir of our watershed. Let us embrace our roles as caretakers of God’s majestic creation.

It is good and we rejoice!

Don’t you want to laugh at St. Peter in our Gospel story? “When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he tucked in his garment… and jumped into the sea.”

The boat dragged one hundred fifty-three large fish to shore. Jesus asked for some of the fish and Peter, by himself, dragged the whole lot to Jesus. How excited Peter felt when the Lord invited him and his brothers to have breakfast.

When was the last time that we were excited to come to church? To hear the sermons, of course. But to accept the Lord’s invitation to come to the table. After all, here is the Bread of Life and the Cup of Salvation. Here is our very Lord who wants to be close to us. Lord, yes, but also a brother to us. We are part of His family. He is ready to stand by us through thick and thin. We can pour out our hearts to him, in good times and in bad. It’s exciting to us to come home here in church; to be with our brothers and sisters; to be with our God. Isn’t it at least a little bit exciting?