

*Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. 2And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them as their God; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; 4he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away." 5And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." 6Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life.*

She asked, "What will our bodies be like in the resurrection?"

Even as she asked the question I heard another another question underneath her question.

She was a woman who years earlier had a breast surgically removed to stop the spread of cancer within her body. The surgery had been a success, but she had lived in a body marred, marked by the cutting that had saved her life.

Am I going to have one breast forever? That was her real question.

She knew about Jesus, the marks in his hands and his feet. Would her scar be with her eternally?

I can't remember my answer way back then. But I would like to center our thoughts this day on God's answer to that question and so many more. God speaks in our second lesson: *See, I am making all things new.*

New. John's vision in Revelation was of a new heaven and a new earth. Not a patching up of the old places. New heaven. New earth.

*See, I am making all things new.*

And when will God get started making things new?

Already.

Today.

You.

Paul tells us: "If anyone is in Christ there is a new creation, everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new."

Today we celebrate All Saints Sunday. For Roman Catholics from whom we inherit the day All Saints Day is about the holiest of God's people. People like mother Teresa, though she has not yet been named a saint, or like St. Francis of Assisi. These were people who shone with the newness of God's love.

In a way they were people who lived a heavenly life here on earth. They did not love with "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" sort of love - I'll give you as much as I can expect to get back from you in return. No, Mother Teresa and Francis appeared to love with a Jesus sort of love, Jesus' own love.

But as we celebrate All Saints Sunday here, we do not spend much time thinking about the superstars of faith and of loving, but about mom and dad who died, a spouse, a grandparent, a sister, a brother. We think about seeing them once more, about our missing them, about God's care for them now. As I think about my parents who died years ago, I don't worry so much about them being new, or holy, I'd just like to see them again and be with them again, to receive their love again and to give my love to them. I'll always miss them. I am counting on Jesus to dry my tears by bringing us together once more.

But when God speaks to us of the end, a new heaven and a new earth, the description is not of a family reunion. No, the loud voice from the throne says, "*See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them as their God; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more, mourning and crying and pain will be no more for the first things have passed away.*"

Do you think God could pull this new Jerusalem down out of heaven and into your life right now? Could God take God's place here, in you, make God's home among you? Could God make you his people, be with you? Wipe away your tears? Now. Already.

Yes, in Jesus Christ God can do just that. Jesus' own Holy Spirit is in you.

If anyone is in Christ there is a new creation