

Third Sunday of Easter Sunday, May 05, 2019

The Collect: O God, whose blessed Son made himself known to his disciples in the breaking of bread: Open the eyes of our faith, that we may behold him in all his redeeming work; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

First Lesson: Acts 9:1-20 read from the Lexham English Bible

But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest 2 and asked for letters from him to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, both men and women, he could bring them tied up to Jerusalem. 3 Now as he proceeded, it happened that when he approached Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. 4 And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" 5 So he said, "Who are you, Lord?" And he said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting! 6 But get up and enter into the city, and it will be told to you what you must do." 7 (Now the men who were traveling together with him stood speechless, because they heard the voice but saw no one.) 8 So Saul got up from the ground, but although his eyes were open he could see nothing. And leading him by the hand, they brought him into Damascus. 9 And he was unable to see for three days, and he did not eat or drink.

10 Now there was a certain disciple in Damascus named Ananias, and the Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias!" And he said, "Behold, here I am, Lord!" 11 And the Lord said to him, "Get up, go to the street called 'Straight' and in the house of Judas look for a man named Saul from Tarsus. For behold, he is praying, 12 and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in and placing hands on him so that he may regain his sight." 13 But Ananias replied, "Lord, I have heard from many people about this man, how much harm he has done to your saints in Jerusalem, 14 and here he has authority from the chief priests to tie up all who call upon your name!" 15 But the Lord said to him, "Go, because this man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel. 16 For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name." 17 So Ananias departed and entered into the house, and placing his hands on him, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus,

who appeared to you on the road by which you came, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” 18 And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes and he regained his sight and got up and was baptized, 19 and after taking food, he regained his strength. And he was with the disciples in Damascus several days.

20 And immediately he began proclaiming Jesus in the synagogues: “This one is the Son of God!”

The Word of the Lord

Psalm 30 read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer

- 1 I will exalt you, O Lord,
because you have lifted me up *
and have not let my enemies triumph over me.
- 2 O Lord my God, I cried out to you, *
and you restored me to health.
- 3 You brought me up, O Lord, from the dead; *
you restored my life as I was going down to the grave.
- 4 Sing to the Lord, you servants of his; *
give thanks for the remembrance of his holiness.
- 5 For his wrath endures but the twinkling of an eye, *
his favor for a lifetime.
- 6 Weeping may spend the night, *
but joy comes in the morning.
- 7 While I felt secure, I said,
“I shall never be disturbed. *
You, Lord, with your favor, made me as strong as
the mountains.”
- 8 Then you hid your face, *
and I was filled with fear.
- 9 I cried to you, O Lord; *
I pleaded with the Lord, saying,

10 “What profit is there in my blood, if I go down to the Pit? *

will the dust praise you or declare your faithfulness?

11 Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me; *

O Lord, be my helper.”

12 You have turned my wailing into dancing; *

you have put off my sack-cloth and clothed me with joy.

13 Therefore my heart sings to you without ceasing; *

O Lord my God, I will give you thanks for ever.

Epistle: Revelation 5:11-14 read from the Message Bible

11-14 I looked again. I heard a company of Angels around the Throne, the Animals, and the Elders—ten thousand times ten thousand their number, thousand after thousand after thousand in full song:

The slain Lamb is worthy!

Take the power, the wealth, the wisdom, the strength!

Take the honor, the glory, the blessing!

Then I heard every creature in Heaven and earth, in underworld and sea, join in, all voices in all places, singing:

To the One on the Throne! To the Lamb!

The blessing, the honor, the glory, the strength,

For age after age after age.

The Four Animals called out, “Oh, Yes!” The Elders fell to their knees and worshiped.

The Word of the Lord

Gospel: John 21:1-19 read from the Modern English Version Bible

21 After this, Jesus revealed Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias. He revealed Himself this way: 2 Simon Peter; Thomas, called The Twin; Nathanael of Cana in Galilee; the sons of Zebedee; and two more of His disciples were together. 3 Simon Peter said to them, “I am going fishing.” Then they said to him, “We will go with you.” They went out and immediately entered the boat. But that night they caught nothing.

4 When the morning came, Jesus stood on the shore. But the disciples did not know that it was Jesus.

5 Jesus said to them, "Children, do you have any fish?"

They answered Him, "No."

6 He said to them, "Throw the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they threw it, and now they were not able to draw it in because of the abundance of fish.

7 Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he had taken it off, and jumped into the sea. 8 The other disciples came in the little boat, dragging the net full of fish. For they were not far from land, but about three hundred feet away. 9 When they came to land, they saw a charcoal fire there with fish lying on it, and bread.

10 Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish which you have just caught." 11 Simon Peter went up and dragged the net, full of one hundred and fifty-three large fish, to land. Although there were so many, the net was not torn. 12 Jesus said to them, "Come and eat breakfast." None of the disciples dared ask, "Who are You?" They knew it was the Lord. 13 Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and likewise the fish. 14 This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to His disciples after He was raised from the dead.

15 So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?"

He said to Him, "Yes, Lord. You know that I love You."

He said to him, "Feed My lambs."

16 He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?"

He said to Him, "Yes, Lord. You know that I love You."

He said to him, "Tend My sheep."

17 He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?"

Peter was grieved because He asked him the third time, "Do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Lord, You know everything. You know that I love You."

Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep. 18 Truly, truly I say to you, when you were young, you dressed yourself and walked where you desired. But when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go." 19 He said this, signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. When He had said this, He

said to him, “Follow Me.”

The Gospel of the Lord

Closing Prayer: On May 9 we remember Gregory of Nazianzus Bishop of Constantinople. Read from *The Great Cloud of Witnesses*.

Gregory of Nazianzus, one of the Cappadocian Fathers, loved God, the art of letters, and the human race—in that order. He was born about 330 in Nazianzus in Cappadocia (now Turkey), the son of a local bishop. He studied rhetoric in Athens with his friend Basil of Caesarea, and Julian, later to be the apostate emperor.

Gregory, together with Basil, compiled an anthology of Origen’s works, *The Philokalia*. Two years later, he returned to his home, a town then rent by heresies and schism. His defense of his father’s orthodoxy in the face of a violent mob brought peace to the town and prominence to Gregory.

In 361, against his will, Gregory was ordained presbyter, and settled down to live an austere, priestly life. He was not to have peace for long. Basil, in his fight against the Arian Emperor Valens, compelled Gregory to become Bishop of Sasima. According to Gregory, it was “a detestable little place without water or grass or any mark of civilization.” He felt, he said, like “a bone flung to the dogs.” His friendship with Basil suffered a severe break.

Deaths in his family, and that of his estranged friend Basil, brought Gregory himself to the point of death. He withdrew for healing.

In 379, Gregory moved to Constantinople, a new man and no longer in despair. He appeared as one afire with the love of God. His fame as a theologian rests on five sermons he delivered during this period on the doctrine of the Trinity. They are marked by clarity, strength, and a charming gaiety.

The next year, the new Emperor Theodosius entered Constantinople and expelled its Arian bishop and clergy. Then, on a rainy day, the crowds in the Great Church of Hagia Sophia

acclaimed Gregory bishop, after a ray of sunlight suddenly shone on him.

Power and position meant nothing to Gregory. After the Ecumenical Council of 381, he retired to Nazianzus, where he died in 389. Among the Fathers of the Church, he alone is known as “The Divine,” “The Theologian.”

Let us Pray: Almighty God, you have revealed to your Church your eternal Being of glorious majesty and perfect love as one God in Trinity of Persons: Give us grace that, like your bishop Gregory of Nazianzus, we may continue steadfast in the confession of this faith, and constant in our worship of you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; for you live and reign for ever and ever.

Amen.