

The New Heaven and New Earth (5th Sunday of Easter, Year C)

Revelation 21:1-5—The New Creation

¹ 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. ² And I saw *the holy city, new Jerusalem*, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; ³ and I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, *the dwelling of God is with men*. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them; ⁴ *he will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away.*” ⁵ And he who sat upon the throne said, “Behold, *I make all things new.*” (Revelation 21:1-5)

The New Creation

1. New Creation: Isaiah’s prophecy of new creation (Isa 65:17-25)
2. New Jerusalem: the new Jerusalem is the “bride” of God (Isa 62:5)
3. New Exodus: the “dwelling” or “tabernacle” (Greek *skēnē*) (21:3; cf. John 1:14)
4. New Universe: making “all things” (Greek *panta*) (21:5)

The Living Tradition

Bede: Then ‘the form of this world will pass away’ in a conflagration of heavenly fires, so that when *heaven and earth have been changed into something better*, the congruent quality of this double transformation may harmonize with *the incorruptibility and immortality of the bodies of the saints*. (Bede, *Commentary on Revelation*, 21:1 [trans. Faith Wallis])¹

Catechism: At the end of time, the Kingdom of God will come in its fullness. *After the universal judgment, the righteous will reign for ever with Christ, glorified in body and soul. The universe itself will be renewed:*

The Church ... will receive her perfection only in the glory of heaven, when will come the time of the renewal of all things. At that time, together with the human race, *the universe itself*, which is so closely related to man and which attains its destiny through him, *will be perfectly re-established in Christ*. (CCC 1042, quoting Vatican II, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, no. 48)

¹ Bede, *Commentary on Revelation* (Trans. Faith Wallis; Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013), 259.

Questions for Discussion and Reflection (5th Sunday of Easter, Year C)

1. Have you ever thought about what will happen *after* the final judgment and the end of this world? What does the Church officially teach about life in the New Creation?

For Further Reading

1. Bede. *Commentary on Revelation*. Translated by Faith Wallis. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013.
2. Peter S. Williamson. *Revelation*. Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2015.