

The New Jerusalem (6th Sunday of Easter, Year C)

Revelation 21:10-14, 22-23—The New Jerusalem

¹⁰ And in the Spirit he carried me away to a great, high mountain, and showed me *the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God*, ¹¹ having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. ¹² It had a great, high wall, with *twelve gates*, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the *twelve tribes of the sons of Israel* were inscribed; ¹³ on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. ¹⁴ *And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb...* ²² And I saw *no temple in the city*, for *its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb*. ²³ And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine upon it, for *the glory of God is its light*, and its lamp is the Lamb. (Revelation 21:10-14, 22-23)

The New Temple

1. New Jerusalem: Isaiah's prophecy of new creation (Isa 62:5; 65:17-25)
2. New Exodus: compare tribal arrangements of Tabernacle (21:12-13; cf. Exod 25-40)
3. Elders and Apostles: together make up the New Jerusalem (21:12-14)
 - a. Twelve Tribes of Israel
 - b. Twelve Apostles of Christ
3. New Temple: "no temple" in city; the "temple" = "Lord God" and "the Lamb" (21:22)
4. New Light: "glory of God" is the light of the new creation (cf. Isa 60:19-20)

The Living Tradition

Andrew of Caesarea: The foundations of the walls are the blessed apostles, upon whom the church of Christ has been established. (Andrew of Caesarea, *Commentary on the Apocalypse* 21:14 [trans. W. C. Weinrich])

Bede: The city was founded by these men [the twelve patriarchs] although it is through the apostles, as if through gates, that it is opened more widely to the nations that are destined to believe. (Bede, *Commentary on Revelation* 21:14 [trans. F. Wallis])

Clement of Rome: The Apostles received the Gospel for us from the Lord Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ was sent from God... Preaching, accordingly, throughout the country and the cities, *they appointed their first-fruits, after testing them by the Spirit, to be bishops and deacons of those who should believe...* Our Apostles also knew, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that there would be contention over the bishop's office. 2 So, for this cause, having received complete foreknowledge, they appointed the above-mentioned men, and afterwards gave them a permanent character, so that, as they died, other approved men should succeed to their ministry. (Clement of Rome, *To the Corinthians* 42.1, 4; 44.1-2)

[trans. F. X. Glimm et al.])¹

Questions for Discussion and Reflection (6th Sunday of Easter, Year C)

1. What is your concept of apostolic succession? What role do the Twelve Apostles play in the Church that was founded by Jesus Christ?

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.

¹ *The Apostolic Fathers* (trans. F. X. Glimm, J. M.-F. Marique, and G. G. Walsh; Fathers of the Church 1; Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1947), 42, 44.