

*Something New*  
*Father Frank Matera*  
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One of the characteristics of American life is its fascination with what is new and different. Whether it is a new computer, a new phone, or a new car, we are attracted to what is new. We tend to think that what is new is better. And so we are always looking for the latest version, the newest model. But what is new quickly becomes old and tiresome. And when it does, the cycle begins again: we look for something new, something that will satisfy our deepest longing.

In today's second reading, St. John gives us a glimpse of something that is truly new, something that will satisfy us forever. Filled with the spirit of prophecy, he sees a new heaven and a new earth that has been changed and transformed by God's grace. John sees a holy city, a New Jerusalem, coming down from heaven like a bride adorned for her husband. And he hears a voice proclaim: behold the holy city where God dwells with human beings. There will be no more tears in that city, he says, for the power of death will be destroyed once and for all. The old order will pass away and God will make all things new.

Although John's vision is filled with metaphors and symbols, its meaning is clear: the world in which we live is passing away; and when it does God will make all things new. We will live *with* God in a new creation, God's own creation, which will be eternally new. We will no longer look for what is new and different because God who is eternally new will dwell in our midst.

St. John's vision of a new heaven and a new earth is not only about the future. For if we live in and with Christ, this future is something we already experience in Christ. The life of grace we share in the Eucharist, for example, is a foretaste of our life with God. The life of the Spirit who changes and transforms our lives is a foretaste of the life we will enjoy when God makes all things new. Our life in Christ is the beginning of a new life that will continue into God's new creation.

But if we already belong to this new creation then we must live in a new way. This is why Jesus gives us a new commandment, the commandment to love each other in the way that he loves us. Such love is new and creative because it imitates the love of the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for us. Such love is worthy of the new creation because it enables us to live as Jesus lived. Such love satisfies our deepest longing because it is God's own love—the echo of God's life in our soul.

Why are we always looking for something new? Why are we so interested in what is new and different? We search for what is new because we are restless. I suggest, however, that

whether we know it or not our search for what is new is a search for God. For, in seeking what is new, we are seeking God who is eternally new. The problem is that we tend to look in all the wrong places. We look for the latest gadget that will entertain us; we look for the newest item what will excite us. But what is truly new is already within us—it is the life of God in our soul that will continue in God's new creation, the New Jerusalem.

So set aside what is old and dying, and put on what is new and enduring. Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be truly new.