

Lectionary readings: Acts 9: 1-6; Psalm 30; Revelation 5: 11-14; John 21: 1-19

For reflection and prayer

- **Acts 9:** What a transformation: Saul, out for the kill, full of hatred, determined to wipe out all Christians, strong, confident, with power to destroy. Then Saul, blinded by a bright light, lying on the ground, vulnerable, needing to be supported by others and led by the hand. And then filled with a different kind of power - the power of God - a life-giving power. And this whole transformation brought about through an encounter with the risen Christ, whereby the whole of his life is changed and he becomes a new person. This is what Jesus wants to do in each one of us, although not necessarily in such a dramatic way. Let's open ourselves to God each day this week that we might have daily encounters with the living Christ, empowered by Him and challenged to reflect on our lives and the direction we are moving in.
- **Psalm 30:** The Psalmist speaks of the way God has delivered him and given him new life, so that his heart is full of praise and thanksgiving for all God has done for him. This is a reminder to us to give thanks to God for His gracious and loving dealings with us day by day. So let's make each day this week a day of thanksgiving as we look back and see the many ways in which God has blessed us. Can we say, like the Psalmist, that God has turned our mourning into joyful dancing? Whatever our situation, let's ask God to clothe us with joy as we remember His faithfulness and His deep love for us.

- **Revelation 5:** In these verses John speaks of the joyful sound of singing and praise in heaven. When we get there, we will all be joining in that wonderful heavenly choir singing praises to God. What a glorious hope! But God wants us to be singing His praises here on earth. How much singing do we do? How much praising? How much thanksgiving? Let's not wait till we get to heaven before we glorify and praise God. Let's do it now.
- **John 21:** Here the risen Jesus appears to the disciples in Galilee and they catch a huge shoal of fish. They instinctively know that it is the risen Lord. I'm sure there are times when we sense the presence of the risen Lord in our lives. You might like to reflect on any such times. Then you might like to hear Jesus address the words that He spoke to Peter to you: '....., do you love Me?' What is your reply? Then hear Jesus say to you, 'Shepherd, feed, tend, look after My sheep. Follow Me.' You might like to reflect on what Jesus is calling you to do in addressing these words to you.

A prayer

Loving God, You call each one of us to ministry. We thank You for the richness and the diversity of gifts You have given to our congregation, each one having a vital and unique part to play in the life of the church. Clothe us with joy; fill us with a spirit of thanksgiving, and give each one of us a humility to recognise the gifts You have given each one and offer these to You for Your glory and for the blessing of our church. Help us to accept one another in love and to encourage and affirm one another so that each one of us becomes the person You created each of us to be. Amen.