

Water and Air Second Week of Easter Tuesday, April 10, 2018 8:15 AM Acts 4:32-37; **Jn 3:7b-15** (So this is about a new beginning where we begin to live a new life, think in a new way, and have a new will, a will which comes from above, a will that is not rooted in earth.)

“Jesus said to Nicodemus: ‘You must be born from above.’”

Now the lectionary which I have at home is older and that says, **“You must be begotten from above.”** Well the same word in Greek can be translated either way, and that’s part of the point John is making. John loves to play with words. Born, begotten, think of the ways those words are used. For one thing, **it’s men who beget; it’s women who bear** when it comes to children, **but it’s the same word in Greek.** And **“from above” of course means “from God,”** that we have to attain some kind of new life, and it comes from God. **It’s God who begets and it’s God who bears this new life in us.**

Of course this is a long section where Jesus talks about being born of—actually what he says is **“water and air.”** It’s usually translated spirit, but **“spirit” is another word for “air.”** And **“water” of course is a rich medium for life.** Most scientists think that originally life on earth came from the water, very possible. Whenever scientists find water on some other planet or some moon, they are all excited because, well, maybe that means there is life there, so water/life. Air is actually invisible, but very real. **We have to have air to live,** but we can’t see it, but we know it when it’s not there, and so **it reflects the more invisible side to life.** Both are about life. And **air is also often associated with thought,** which, again, is part of living for human beings: thought and will and so on.

So this is about a new beginning where we begin to live a new life, think in a new way, and have a new will, a will which comes from above, a will that is not rooted in earth and in what is primary the earthly desire of survival. It’s something more. And so he talks about eternal, **what is eternal, what is heavenly.** That’s more than survival. That’s life to the full.

So this begins a long discussion with Nicodemus, and **Nicodemus is, in a way, a foil for the rest of us,** because we can’t understand this. How could this happen? **How does it happen?** Jesus’ point is, well, **you can’t really know that any more than you know where the wind is coming from, but that it happens you must see; it’s absolutely essential.**