

## About the Ascension of the Lord

Today we celebrate that forty days after rising from the dead, Jesus ascended to His heavenly Father, to prepare a place for us when we die. He had been with His Apostles for three years in His public ministry, and he tried to prepare them for their ministry to carry on preaching the Good News of salvation to the ends of the earth. In the first reading for today's liturgy from the Acts of the Apostles where we hear the Ascension story, Jesus promises to send his apostles the Holy Spirit. Perhaps they didn't really understand what he meant, because at the end of that reading today we hear:

'Why are you men from Galilee standing here looking into the sky?

Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven, this same Jesus will come back in the same way as you have seen him go there.'

## Ascension of the Lord



## What can we learn from the Ascension of the Lord?

In the Gospel Reading today we hear that Jesus commissioned his apostles to preach the Gospel to the world and baptise people who would become believers. That same command from Jesus applies to us here and now. Yes, our primary focus for our earthly life is to be fixed on Christ. Everything we do should be for the proclamation of the Gospel and a reflection of Christ.

Just like the eleven remaining apostles, Jesus has given us the gift of faith and gifts and talents that we are to use for God's glory, to proclaim and teach the Gospel and serve our neighbour. He does not want us staring the sky waiting for the end of time to come. That is a complete waste of time. Rather, He commissions us to proclaim the Gospel, heal the sick, and live our lives worthily as followers of His Name.

## The Collect

Gladden us with holy joys, almighty God,  
and make us rejoice with devout thanksgiving,  
for the Ascension of Christ your Son  
is our exaltation,  
and, where the Head has gone before in glory,  
the Body is called to follow in hope.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever. Amen.

## Gospel Reading Mark 16:15-20

*Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Good News*

‘Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Good News to all creation.  
He who believes and is baptised will be saved;  
he who does not believe will be condemned.  
These are the signs that will be associated with believers:  
in my name they will cast out devils;  
they will have the gift of tongues;  
they will pick up snakes in their hands,  
and be unharmed should they drink deadly poison;  
they will lay their hands on the sick, who will recover.’

And so the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them,  
was taken up into heaven:  
there at the right hand of God he took his place,  
while they, going out, preached everywhere,  
the Lord working with them and confirming the  
word by the signs that accompanied it.

## Antiphon

Behold, I am with you always,  
even to the end of the age, alleluia.

## Hymn for the Solemnity of the Ascension

We pray this joyful day, O God,  
that where Christ our Head has gone,  
we His Body, the Church, follow:  
on us His glory be shone.  
For He, who at Easter did rise  
from His death upon that Tree,  
has gone before us to prepare  
our place in eternity.

Your task is to preach my Gospel  
to north and south, east and west,  
that all people shall be baptized,  
that the faith shall be professed.  
For I shall give you these great signs:  
that believers in my name  
shall remain unharmed in this life  
and bring healing to the lame.

Jesus, Son of God the Father,  
you promised that you would send  
the Spirit as our Advocate,  
on His guidance we depend.  
That we may be your witnesses  
unto the ends of the earth:  
that your Gospel be heard and taught,  
giving to our lives great worth.

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