

THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

We celebrate the solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord; the elevation of Christ into heaven forty days after his Resurrection.

The Ascension of Christ to heaven, in his human but glorified is the culmination, the sign and the seal of the accomplishment of his saving mission on earth.

But before Christ ascends he tells his disciples that his Ascension is their mission; his ascension begins their mission. So in the gospel he commissions his disciples to preach in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. In the first reading also he tells them that they will be his witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

The point is Jesus wants his disciples to take charge of his flock and bring other sheep into his sheepfold.

Jesus knows that his disciples need the strength from the above before they can undertake the mission he has entrusted to them; they need to be immersed in God's own divine life. So again, in the first reading Jesus says they will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon them; they will be baptized with the Holy Spirit. In the gospel also he says he is sending them the promise of his Father upon them but they should stay in Jerusalem until they are clothed with power from on high.

We know from the Acts of the Apostles that disciples are clothed with power from on high on the day of Pentecost.

The Ascension of Jesus is also the Church's mission and our mission. But we cannot merely use human resources to accomplish this mission. We

need the Holy Spirit who is the principal agent of the whole of the Church's mission.

Pope Benedict XVI in his *Regina Caeli* message, May 11, 2018 says that the grace of Pentecost is not confined to the past but is a gift to be desired, prayed for, and rediscovered today. He, then, invites everyone to rediscover the beauty of being baptized in the Holy Spirit. He asks us to be aware again of our baptism and our confirmation, sources of grace that are always present.

As you are already aware the theme for our parish's mission for this year is "**Discipleship in action go and make a difference**".

Since Jesus' Ascension is the Church's mission and our mission we can, therefore, say we are all missionary disciples. As disciples we are to continue to listen to Jesus and learn from him how to live, pray and do what is pleasing to the Father. And we are to rediscover the beauty of being baptized in the Holy Spirit in order to allow the Holy Spirit to help us as we seek to make a difference.

Making a difference means, that we are to let people feel the presence, goodness, comfort and peace of God in their lives. We are to serve as the visible presence of Jesus Christ in our community.

We are to offer others an explicit witness to the saving love of the Lord. We are also to help them to listen to Jesus and do what is pleasing to God.

Let us be the face of Christ to others.

It is my prayer that we will continue to allow the Holy Spirit to spread in us the joy of living and witnessing to the Gospel.