

THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

MAY 24, 2020

MASS READINGS

MONDAY: ACTS 19:1-8, PS 68, JN 16:29-33
TUESDAY: ACTS 20:17-27, PS 68, JN 17:1-11A
WEDNESDAY: ZEP 3:14-18A or ROM 12:9-16,
IS. 12, LK 1:39-56
THURSDAY: ACTS 22:3-; 23:6-11, PS 16, JN
17:20-26
FRIDAY: ACTS 25:13B-21, PS 103, JN 21:15-19
SATURDAY: ACTS 28:16-20, 30-31, PS 11, JN
21:20-25
**NEXT SUNDAY: PENTECOST SUNDAY-
RDGS: ACTS 2:1-11, PS 104, 1 COR 12:3B-
K7, 12-13, JN 20:19-23**

MASS INTENTIONS

MONDAY: BUD & BRIDGET FITZSIMONS
TUESDAY: RAYMOND BROWN
WEDNESDAY: FERRITER FAMILY
THURSDAY: JEAN & PAT HALL-ANNIVERSARY
FRIDAY: SI: MIKE ROBERTS FAMILY
VIGIL: BUD & BRIDGET FITZSIMONS
7:30: RAYMOND BROWN
10:00: LILLIAN MILLS
NOON: FOR THE PARISH

MEMORIAL FLOWERS

Those serving in our Armed Forces, especially those soldiers who have connections to our parish: (Keith Gillam, Jean Murphy, Kris Stevens). Helen & Dean Butz family. Ann Hubertz. Charles Connor. Jody Geller. Farrell & LaGuire family. Claude & Anna King. Carl Waclawik. Pete Synesael & family. Kincaid family.

GOSPEL REFLECTION:

“Christ is already in that “place” of peace, which is all in all. He is on the right hand of God. He is hidden in the brightness of the radiance which issues from the everlasting throne. He is in the very abyss of peace, where there is no voice of tumult or distress, but a deep stillness--stillness, that greatest and most awful of all goods which we can fancy; that most perfect of joys, the utter profound, ineffable tranquility of the Divine Essence. He has entered into His rest. That is our home; here we are on a pilgrimage, and Christ calls us to His many mansions which He has prepared.” - Venerable John Henry Newman

“Today our Lord Jesus Christ ascended into heaven; let our hearts ascend with him. Listen to the words of the Apostle: If you have risen with Christ, set your hearts on the things that are above where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God; seek the things that are above, not the things that are on earth. For just as he remained with us even after his ascension, so we too are already in heaven with him, even though what is promised us has not yet been fulfilled in our bodies.” - St. Augustine

“I answer that Christ’s Ascension is the cause of our salvation in two ways: first of all, on our part; secondly, on His. On our part, in so far as by the Ascension our souls are uplifted to Him; because...His Ascension fosters, first, faith; secondly, hope; thirdly, charity. Fourthly, our reverence for Him is thereby increased, since we no longer deem Him an earthly man, but the God of heaven; thus the Apostle says (2 Corinthians 5:16): “If we have known Christ according to the flesh — that is, as mortal, whereby we reputed Him as a mere man,” as the gloss interprets the words — “but now we know Him so no longer.” On His part, in regard to those things which, in ascending, He did for our salvation. First, He prepared the way for our ascent into heaven, according to His own saying (John 14:2): “I go to prepare a place for you,” and the words of Micah (2:13), “He shall go up that shall open the way before them.”

THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

MAY 24, 2020

For since He is our Head the members must follow whither the Head has gone: hence He said (John 14:3): “That where I am, you also may be.” In sign whereof He took to heaven the souls of the saints delivered from hell, according to Psalm 67:19 (Cf. Ephesians 4:8): “Ascending on high, He led captivity captive,” because He took with Him to heaven those who had been held captives by the devil — to heaven, as to a place strange to human nature. captives in deed of a happy taking, since they were acquired by His victory. Secondly, because as the high-priest under the Old Testament entered the holy place to stand before God for the people, so also Christ entered heaven “to make intercession for us,” as is said in Hebrews 7:25. Because the very showing of Himself in the human nature which He took with Him to heaven is a pleading for us. so that for the very reason that God so exalted human nature in Christ, He may take pity on them for whom the Son of God took human nature. Thirdly, that being established in His heavenly seat as God and Lord, He might send down gifts upon men, according to Ephesians 4:10: “He ascended above all the heavens, that He might fill all things,” that is, “with His gifts,” according to the gloss.” - St. Thomas Aquinas

“But you will say, How does this concern me? Because you also shall be taken up in like manner into the clouds. For your body is of like nature to His body, therefore shall your body be so light, that it can pass through the air. For as is the head, so also is the body; as the beginning, so also the end. See then how you are honored by this beginning. Man was the lowest part of the rational creation, but the feet have been made the head, being lifted up aloft into the royal throne in their head.” - St. John Chrysostom

“It has always seemed logical to me that the most holy humanity of Christ should ascend to the glory of the Father. The ascension has always made me very happy.

But I think that the sadness that is particular to the day of the ascension is also a proof of the love that we feel for Jesus Christ, our Lord. He is God made man, perfect man, with flesh like ours, with blood like ours in his veins. Yet he leaves us and goes up to heaven. How can we help but miss his presence?” - St. Josemaria Escriva



The Ascension of Christ and His Glorified Existence
by Fr. William G. Most

Forty days after his Resurrection, Jesus ascended into heaven. During this period between his Resurrection and Ascension, He actually gave the primacy He had promised to Peter, as we read in John 21. The many events between His resurrection and ascension preclude the theory that He ascended on Easter. His ascension does not mean that heaven is somewhere up in space. This was a way of making clear that He was leaving the present mode of existence. St. Paul in Colossians 3:1 urges us to live our lives now as if we had already died, had risen, and had ascended with Him. In a mystical sense we have done that, in that our Head has done that. In the physical sense it is still in the future.

THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

MAY 24, 2020

He ascended to receive the glory due to Him as conqueror of sin and death (Philippians 2:8-11); to be our Mediator and advocate with the Father (Hebrews 9:24); to send the Holy Spirit as He had promised at the Last Supper (John 16:7); and to prepare a place for us as He also promised (John 14:2).

Now He is seated at the Father's right hand, which means that, as He said, "all power has been given to Me in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:18). He always had that power as God, but now He exercises it as man, as King of the Universe, with His Mother beside Him as Queen of the Universe.

As God He is everywhere, but not as man, though He is present on earth most widely in the Holy Eucharist, even as man.

Besides this real bodily presence in the Eucharist, Christ is present on earth in other, lesser ways. Vatican II explained the various forms of presence, in the Constitution on the Liturgy, # 7: "Christ is always present to His Church, especially in liturgical actions. He is present in the Sacrifice of the Mass in the person of the priest; 'He is the same one, now offering by the ministry of priests, who then offered Himself on the Cross [citing the Council of Trent].' But He is most greatly present under the Eucharistic species. He is present by His power in the Sacraments, so that when anyone baptizes, Christ Himself baptizes. He is present in His word, for He speaks when the Sacred Scriptures are read in the Church. He is present, finally, when the Church prays and sings the Psalms, He who promised 'Where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in their midst'"

(Matthew 18:20).

Taken from The Basic Catholic Catechism PART FOUR: The Apostles' Creed VI-VIII Sixth Article: "He ascended into heaven; He sits at the right hand of God the Father almighty".

The **Ascension** is one of the great feasts in the Christian liturgical calendar, and commemorates the bodily ascension of Jesus into heaven and His completion of the work of our redemption. Ascension Day is always Thursday (the fortieth day of Easter); in some churches (especially in the United States) it is commemorated on the subsequent Sunday (the Sunday before Pentecost). The Feast presents us an opportunity to assess the relationship between our profession of faith and its manifestation in our daily lives.

Many times we tend to focus on the vision of Christ ascending towards heaven as being the only important event or message of this Holy Day of Obligation. The message and significance of Christ's ascension actually encompasses much more and brings with it a very beautiful and amazing message of hope and a promise of a magnificent future, and with it Christ's guiding words on how we can attain it.

Having celebrated Easter we heard of Jesus' resurrection. However, having risen from the dead, Christ did not ascend immediately into heaven. The risen Christ stayed on earth for 40 days after His resurrection. During this time He appeared to many people in His glorified body. He did this, in part, as proof of His resurrection. If no one had seen Him then there would be no proof of His resurrection and no witnesses to attest to it. Jesus also had to complete the training and commissioning of His 12 disciples.

At the Last Supper on Holy Thursday night He made the apostles priests.

Easter Sunday night He complemented their priesthood with the power to forgive sins.

When Christ appears to them at another time, He fulfills His promise to Peter to make him (Peter) head of His church.

Christ explains to the apostles the Holy Spirit, who will stay behind (until He comes again) and will serve as the life-giving Spirit in His church.

Christ outlines to the apostles their future course of action.

Finally on Mt. Olivet, on the day we commemorate as Ascension Thursday, Christ gives His apostles their final command to go and preach the Gospel to the whole world; giving them His final blessing, He ascends towards heaven.

Jesus Christ has bridged heaven and earth. All that separated us from the Father has been definitively dealt with and we have been redeemed. We are now in the process of being re-created anew in Him as we freely cooperate with His grace at work within us and mediated through His Body, the Church, through the Word and the Sacraments which communicate His Divine Life.

The Ascension of Jesus is much more than His return to heaven. It is much more meaningful than Jesus departing from the earth. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines *ascension* as "The act of rising or increasing to higher levels, values, or degrees". Christ's ascension was not so much spatial as it was metaphysical. He became a higher being. Christ was elevated, enhanced, *transfigured* (given a new and typically exalted or spiritual appearance).

THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

MAY 24, 2020

In the book *The Faith Explained*, It states that Jesus was “spiritualized”, freed from the limitations of the physical world. It goes on to say:

“It was (and is) a body that could no longer suffer or die; a body that radiated the brightness and beauty of a soul united with God; a body that physical matter could not impede...a body which had no need to travel by laborious steps, but which could pass from place to place with the speed of thought; it was a body freed from such organic necessities as food and drink and sleep.”

The reason that this should bring us great joy and hope is that not only has Christ risen from the dead, but the great news is that we will also rise from the dead and share in this glorified state of being. Every time we say the Apostles’ Creed we proclaim that “...we believe in the resurrection of the body...”. When Jesus comes again, our soul will be reunited with our new glorified body to live in union with God for all eternity!

Before Christ ascended, He not only gave His disciples guidance on how they could attain this resurrection and glorification, but He was speaking to all of us; past, present and future.

“Today our Lord Jesus Christ ascended into heaven; let our hearts ascend with him. Listen to the words of the Apostle: If you have risen with Christ, set your hearts on the things that are above where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God; seek the things that are above, not the things that are on earth. For just as he remained with us even after his ascension, so we too are already in heaven with him, even though what is promised us has not yet been fulfilled in our bodies.” (Liturgy of the Hours)

We are on a constant life pilgrimage heading towards the Eucharistic Kingdom (a place where we will be in spiritual communion with God) which Jesus has prepared for us. Every time we go to Mass we are reminded to keep our eyes fixed towards the heavens, but that in order to reach our destination we must also keep our eyes fixed on the greater obligation of the work that we must do on earth.

Each one of us is an instrument of God and we all have been given a gift by the Holy Spirit that has equipped us to help in this task of helping Jesus finish what He started. Our entire existence should be to work towards finding that mission that God has given specifically to each and everyone of us. We must do as the angels instructed the apostles and stop looking into space, but get to work.

When Christ ascended, He left with the intention that we take up where He left off. Christ rules and reigns over the church and coordinates the works of the church as He governs and guides over her. This should give us strength in knowing that although He ascended he never truly left us. He is Love Incarnate (love in bodily form) and will walk forever through time in each and every one of us.

“Where the Head is, there is the Body, where I am, there is my Church, we too are one; the Church is in me and I in her and we two are your Beloved and your Lover.” In other words, we have ascended with the Lord! He is the Head and we are members of His Body.

Jesus said “Abide in me as I in you” (John 15:4). These are not mere religious sentiments, but reality now because of what has occurred through the “Paschal Mystery”; the saving life, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus. Living, abiding in Christ is meant to become our daily reality. In the past, the Christ (Paschal) Candle, was extinguished on Ascension Thursday, representing the physical departure of Christ from the earth. Now, the Christ Candle remains lit through Pentecost (through the entire Easter season) symbolizing that although Christ ascended, He never truly left us. On the day of Christ’s ascension the apostles more fully understood that Jesus was God and that He would forever be with them, as we rejoice in that knowledge today.

We have ascended with Him and are called to live on earth the very realities of heaven. This Feast is not only a remembrance of an event that occurred thousands of years ago but a reminder of the promise of a life to come, a reminder of the mission and marching orders that we have all been given, and a reminder, that we too, must become enflamed like the apostles, with the deep desire to worship God and go out to the ends of the earth speaking His praises.

THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

MAY 24, 2020

WHAT TO EXPECT AS WE RETURN TO CHURCH

FIRST LET IT BE STATED THAT THE DISPENSATION FROM THE OBLIGATION TO ATTEND HOLY MASS ON SUNDAYS AND HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION OFFERED ON MARCH 17 REMAINS IN EFFECT UNTIL AUGUST 15. IN PARTICULAR, THOSE WHO ARE EXPERIENCING ANY SICKNESS, THOSE WHOSE HEALTH IS IN SOME WAY COMPROMISED, THOSE WHO ARE FEARFUL OF THE POSSIBLE INFECTION OF COVID-19, AND THOSE OVER THE AGE OF 65 SHOULD CONSIDER STAYING HOME.

WE, THE CLERGY AND STAFF OF ST ANN ARE DEDICATED TO YOUR HEALTH AND SAFETY. PLEASE RESPECT THE GUIDELINES THAT ARE IN PLACE SINCE THEY ARE THERE FOR A REASON. PLEASE BE AWARE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL DISTANCING WHEN ENTERING, SEATED AND LEAVING THE CHURCH. WHILE THE METHODS WE ARE ADOPTING ARE NOT 100% EFFECTIVE THEY ARE THE MOST EFFECTIVE UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES AND ARE CERTAINLY AS EFFECTIVE AS WE ALLOW THEM TO BE.

THEREFORE:

PLEASE ATTEND THE MASS TO WHICH YOU HAVE AGREED TO COME. I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE ANTICIPATORY MASS, i.e. THE SATURDAY 4:30 SPECIFICALLY DIRECTED TOWARD OUR OLDER FOLKS WHO ARE ABLE AND WILLING TO COME. (see procedure below) *

ALL ATTENDEES MUST WEAR MASKS AT ALL TIMES, BRIEFLY REMOVED FOR THE RECEPTION OF HOLY COMMUNION. NOTICE THAT SOME AREAS OF THE CHURCH ARE BLOCKED OFF, THIS IS TO ASSURE PROPER DISTANCING. FOLKS FROM SAME HOUSEHOLDS MAY SIT TOGETHER BUT PLEASE OBSERVE THE USUAL 6 FOOT DISTANCE BETWEEN ONE ANOTHER.

WE WILL NOT BE TAKING UP THE COLLECTION IN THE USUAL FASHION, PLEASE NOTICE THE BASKETS PLACED NEAR THE EXITS FOR THAT PURPOSE. WE HAVE EXPERIENCED A NOTICABLE DROP IN OFFERING SINCE ALL THIS BEGAN AND WHILE IT HAS NOT YET HAD A SERIOUS IMPACT, IT HAS MADE IT RATHER DIFFICULT AND WE DON'T SEE IT GETTING ANY BETTER UNLESS EVERYONE DOES HIS/HER PART TO SUPPORT THE PARISH.

HOLY COMMUNION FOR THE FAITHFUL WILL BE PLACED AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE MASS. PLEASE APPROACH AGAIN WITH THE 6 FOOT DISTANCING IN PLACE. THOSE WISHING TO EXERCISE THEIR RIGHT TO RECEIVE COMMUNION ON THE TONGUE MUST REMAIN UNTIL THE VERY END SINCE THIS REQUIRES INTERRUPTED CLEANING. ONCE YOU HAVE RECEIVED PLEASE EXIT THE CHURCH AND RETURN TO YOUR CAR.

*ADMISSION TO MASS WILL BE BY TICKET ONLY FOR REGISTERED PARISHIONERS OF ST. ANN. DUE TO SOCIAL DISTANCING THE CAPACITY OF THE CHURCH HAS BEEN REDUCED TO 90 INDIVIDUALS THEREFORE, WE NEED TO EXERCISE SPECIAL CARE IN MAKING SURE WE ARE NOT DANGEROUSLY OVERCROWDED. TO OBTAIN A TICKET YOU MAY GO TO THE LOADING DOCK OF THE SOUP KITCHEN ON WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY, OR FRIDAY FROM 8:30 A.M. TO 11:30 A.M. THESE TIMES WILL BE STRICTLY OBSERVED AND NO EXCEPTIONS. TELL STEVE WHICH MASS YOU WILL ATTEND AND HOW MANY TICKETS YOU WILL NEED. ONE TICKET PER INDIVIDUAL. WHEN YOU COME TO MASS YOU WILL ENTER BY THE SIDE ENTRANCE (SOUTH EAST) ONLY. THE FRONT DOORS WILL REMAIN LOCKED AND NO ADMITTANCE WILL BE PERMITTED. PLACE YOUR TICKET IN THE BOX AT THE DOOR AND PROCEED TO A DESIGNATED SEATING AREA. PLEASE NOTE ABOVE THE PROTOCOL FOR COMMUNION AND MAINTAIN APPROPRIATE SOCIAL DISTANCING. PLEASE TAKE THESE DIRECTIVES SERIOUSLY. THEY ARE IN PLACE FOR YOUR HEALTH AND SAFETY. *Blessings: Fr. Dominic*