

Solemnity of the Ascension

Note: After Jesus rose from the dead on Easter, Jesus spent time with the disciples and taught them for forty days. Then he went up to heaven (Acts 1:3, 9). We call this the Ascension. The Church traditionally celebrated the Ascension of Jesus forty days after Easter, which would be this past Thursday. Because this is such an important event in Jesus's life and in our lives as Jesus's followers, the celebration has been moved to Sunday by our bishop. We call the Ascension a solemnity, a feast day of the highest rank in the Church. **As you pray today, ask yourself why the Ascension is important in God's plan.**

Proclamation: Jesus loves me and he calls me to be his disciple! I can follow Him because Jesus is with the Father and sends me his Holy Spirit.

Praise and Prayer: "All you peoples, clap your hands, shout to God with cries of gladness. For the Lord, the Most High, the awesome, is the great king over all the earth." *Responsorial Psalm 47*

Jesus is our King, reigning over heaven and earth! *Take a few minutes to praise him.*

Worship the Lord: [**BUILD YOUR KINGDOM HERE**](#) Rend Collective
[**OPEN UP THE HEAVENS**](#) Vertical Worship

Scripture: Matthew 28:16-20 *Note: this is the Gospel from Year A*

The Gospel tells Jesus' final instructions to his disciples before returning to heaven. These words are for each of us who follow Jesus. So imagine yourself as one of the disciples in this passage:

The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had ordered them. When they saw him, they worshiped, but they doubted. Then Jesus approached and said to them, "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age."

Lectio Divina: *Praying with God's Holy Word. Prayerfully read the Gospel passage above and use the questions below to guide your discussion.*

What words in the Gospel stand out to you?

The disciples "worshiped" Jesus but they also "doubted"—that is, they weren't sure about him. Yet Jesus commands them anyway to go and build his kingdom. And it's good they did: Now we can know Jesus! And we see that we don't have to be perfect to be part of his kingdom.

- Do you feel ready to follow Jesus?
- How can you serve him?
- How can you prepare to serve him more as you grow up?

Visio Divina: *Praying with sacred art. Prayerfully study the painting below and use the questions on the next page to guide your discussion.*



Singing Children, by Ferdinand Georg Waldmüller, 1858.

*Sing praise to God, sing praise;
sing praise to our king, sing praise. (Psalm 47)*

This painting is called "Singing Children". How can you tell that the children are praying and singing? Which child do you think is most like you? Why? What do you think the little boy at the window is thinking? How can you share God's love with someone who is "at the window" and wanting to be loved?

Called to Greatness: *Read today's Gospel one more time.* Did you hear what Jesus said? He said that he will be with us always! He can be with us always because of the Holy Spirit living in us. Pray that Jesus will make you more aware of his presence in you today.

Novena Prayer: Come, Holy Spirit!

Action Idea: Ask God to tell you whom you could share his love with this week: maybe someone in your family, a neighbor, a friend. Then you can maybe

- write a letter or make a card for that person
- call, e-mail or Zoom with that person (ask your parents first)
- visit your friend, relative or neighbor in person if you can

Symbols of the Holy Spirit: Tongues of Fire



At Pentecost when the disciples were gathered in the Upper Room, fire in the shape of tongues descended on their heads and they were filled with the Holy Spirit. Fire is a common symbol of the Holy Spirit because he grants us energy and power to live for Christ and to proclaim the Gospel.