

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Men of Galilee, why gaze in wonder at the heavens?
This Jesus whom you saw ascending into heaven
will return as you saw him go, alleluia.

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.
We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

COLLECT

Grant, we pray, almighty God,
 that we, who believe that your Only Begotten
 Son, our Redeemer,
 ascended this day to the heavens,
 may in spirit dwell already in heavenly
 realms.
 Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of
 the Holy Spirit,
 God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING

Acts 1:1-11

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

In my earlier work, Theophilus, I dealt with everything Jesus had done and taught from the beginning until the day he gave his instructions to the apostles he had chosen through the Holy Spirit, and was taken up to heaven. He had shown himself alive to them after his Passion by many demonstrations: for forty days he had continued to appear to them and tell them about the kingdom of God. When he had been at table with them, he had told them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for what the Father had promised. "It is," he had said, "what you have heard me speak about: John baptised with water but you, not many days from now, will be baptised with the Holy Spirit."

Now having met together, they asked him, "Lord, has the time come? Are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" He replied, "It is not for you to know times or dates that the Father has decided by his own authority, but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and then you will be my witnesses not only in Jerusalem but throughout Judaea and Samaria, and indeed to the ends of the earth."

As he said this he was lifted up while they looked on, and a cloud took him from their sight. They were still staring into the sky when suddenly two men in white were

standing near them and they said, "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."

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Ps 46

Response:

God goes up with shouts of joy;
the Lord goes up with trumpet blast.
 or
Alleluia!

1. All peoples, clap your hands,
 cry to God with shouts of joy!
 For the Lord, the Most High, we must
 fear,
 great king over all the earth. (R.)
2. God goes up with shouts of joy;
 the Lord goes up with trumpet blast.
 Sing praise for God, sing praise,
 sing praise to our king, sing praise. (R.)
3. God is king of all the earth.
 Sing praise with all your skill.
 God is king over the nations;
 God reigns on his holy throne. (R.)

SECOND READING

Eph 1:17-23

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians.

May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give you a spirit of wisdom and perception of what is revealed, to bring you to full knowledge of him. May he enlighten the eyes of your mind so that you can see what hope his call holds for you, what rich glories he has promised the saints will inherit and how infinitely great is the power that he has exercised for us believers. This you can tell from the strength of his power at work in Christ, when he used it to raise him from the dead and to make him sit at his right hand, in heaven, far above every Sovereignty, Authority, Power or Domination, or any other name that can be named, not only in this age, but also in the age to come. He has put all things under his feet, and made him, as the ruler of everything, the head of the Church; which is his body, the fullness of him who fills the whole creation.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Go, make disciples of all the nations;
I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Lk 24:46-53

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

Jesus said to his disciples: "You see how it is written that the Christ would suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that, in his name, repentance for the forgiveness of sins would be preached to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses to this.

"And now I am sending down to you what

the Father has promised. Stay in the city then, until you are clothed with the power from on high." Then he took them out as far as the outskirts of Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them. Now as he blessed them, he withdrew from them and was carried up to heaven. They worshipped him and then went back to Jerusalem full of joy; and they were continually in the Temple praising God.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
(all bow during the next two lines)
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting.
Amen.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

We offer sacrifice now in supplication, O Lord,
 to honour the wondrous Ascension of your
 Son:
 grant, we pray,
 that through this most holy exchange
 we, too, may rise up to the heavenly realms.
 Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

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

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Almighty ever-living God,
 who allow those on earth to celebrate divine
 mysteries,
 grant, we pray,
 that Christian hope may draw us onward
 to where our nature is united with you.
 Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Do not grieve over temptations you suffer.
 When the Lord intends to bestow a particular
 virtue on us, He often permits us first to be
 tempted by the opposite vice. Therefore, look
 upon every temptation as an invitation to
 grow in a particular virtue and promise God
 that you will be successful, if only you stand
 fast.

St Philip Neri

29 MAY 2022

Sunday Message

THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

THE WORD

Year C • Season Colour: White • Psalter Week 3



Fresco of the Ascension of Jesus, in side apse of the Church of St Wenceslas, Prague

Luke tells us in today's gospel reading of Jesus' final meeting with his disciples. Once again Jesus reminds them that all that has happened to him was written down in the Hebrew Scriptures and therefore was the will of God.

During his ministry, Jerusalem was the focus of his journey, the place where his destiny and God's salvation would be accomplished. Now, the holy city will become the hub from which the Gospel will spread out to the world, and the disciples will be responsible for this. Jesus promises them the gift of the Spirit which they will receive when Jesus sends it.

When they go to Bethany, Jesus confers on them the blessing which Zechariah was unable to give to the people in the Temple at the beginning of Luke's narrative, then we are told simply that he "was carried up to heaven". The disciples do not see any reason to break with their ancestral religion and practices and continue to frequent the Temple for worship. Thus ends Luke's Gospel; but this is by no means the end of the story. Jesus' outreach and ministry will continue, but now through his disciples, empowered as they will be by the Holy Spirit. The last report we have of them is that they are "continually in the Temple, praising God". We have heard throughout Luke's narrative that this is the proper reaction to Jesus' works of power; it is therefore a fitting conclusion to the entire earthly life and ministry of Jesus. ■

REFLECT

Luke gives us two accounts, separated by 40 days, of the ascension of Jesus, which suggests that this event fulfils two literary functions. At the end of the gospel, it brings to an end the experience the disciples had of the risen Jesus, which we normally call the 'appearances', and the version at the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles is more connected with the coming of the Spirit in the dramatic recounting of Pentecost, which Luke alone relates.

The Ascension teaches an essential lesson about the Easter mystery. If we had only the narratives concerning the circumstances around the empty tomb of Jesus, we might conclude that Jesus had been simply brought back to life, like Lazarus of Bethany or the son of the widow of Nain; he would have been restored to the existence which he had lost. The Ascension emphasises that Jesus has been taken up to God in glory and now enjoys a different kind of life with God. The two aspects are different

SAY

Christ has passed beyond our sight, not to abandon us but to be our hope.

(Preface of the Feast of the Ascension)

LEARN

The Ascension tells us that Jesus now enjoys a glorified life in God's presence.

Luke gives two accounts of this event: the first at the end of the gospel, on the day of the discovery of the empty tomb;

We find the second at the beginning of the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, which is set 40 days later.

The first version brings to an end the appearances of the risen Jesus to the disciples; the second is more related to the coming of the Spirit.

DO

When you are in a lift or on an escalator, think about Jesus being taken up to heaven and think about where you imagine him to be now.



sides of the one coin, but the demands of telling a story require that we separate them.

Jesus' last act is to bless his disciples, who are most probably the larger group, including women, than just the twelve apostles. We can see this from the beginning of Acts and deduce it from the entry into Jerusalem, possibly the Last Supper and the accompanying of Jesus to Gethsemane. They are the ones awaiting Jesus' sending of the Spirit. ■