



Liturgy Cycle C

The Ascension

Introduction

When Christ entered our world, St Paul tells us, 'he emptied himself, taking on the role of a servant.' But because he faithfully accomplished the mission on our behalf which the Father entrusted to him, the Father raised him up in glory. On this day we celebrate the glorification of Christ, our Brother. He wants us to share in his glory when our earthly journey is ended. Let us reflect for a moment on the glory to which Christ calls us.

First Reading (Acts 1:1-11)

Before ascending to heaven Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to his apostles. Now that he would no longer be bodily present among them, it would be up to them, aided by the Spirit, to be his witnesses in the world.

Second Reading (Ephesians 1:17-23)

Paul describes the meaning of the ascension, which is that God has raised Jesus above all earthly powers, and made him not only head of the Church but Lord of creation.

Gospel (Luke 24:46-53)

Before leaving his disciples Jesus sums up for them the meaning of his death and resurrection. Then he commissions them to preach this to all peoples. However, they must not start until they have received the Holy Spirit.

Prayer Of The Faithful

Let us pray to the Father who raised his Son Jesus from the dead and seated him at his right hand in glory that he may help us to follow his path in this life and so come to share his glory in the life to come.

R: Lord, graciously hear us.

That Christ, taken up in glory, may enkindle in all his followers an ardent desire for his kingdom. Lord, hear us.

R: Lord, graciously hear us.

On this day Jesus promised to send his Holy Spirit to his disciples: may he strengthen by the power of that Spirit all those who are working for a more just, peaceful and human world. Lord, hear us.

R: Lord, graciously hear us.



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In Jesus we see one who is crowned now with glory because he suffered death: let us pray to him for all those who have no faith in an afterlife. Lord, hear us.

R: Lord, graciously hear us.

Christ is seated in the glory of heaven: may he intercede for us who put our trust in him and help us to bear witness to him in the world. Lord, hear us.

R: Lord, graciously hear us.

Communion Reflection

On Ascension Day Jesus withdrew his physical presence from his disciples. But physical absence does not mean absence of presence. People can be very close to one another even though separated by thousands of miles.

In fact, physical presence can sometimes actually get in the way of intimate communication. Many of our disappointments in life are caused by the fact that seeing and touching do not always create the closeness we seek.

For people to grow together there must be periods of absence as well as presence. In absence we see each other in a new way. We are less distracted by a person's idiosyncracies and are better able to appreciate his or her true worth.

When we think of each other with love a spiritual bond is created between us' and we enter into a new intimacy. For those who love one another there is no such place as 'far away'.

Lord Jesus, raised in glory to the Father's right hand, may your Spirit create a bond of love between us and you, so that when we think of you we will never be alone.