

SUNDAY MAY 24

World Communications Day

World Day of Prayer for the Church in China

Ascension of the Lord

I READ AND reread the Ascension Sunday readings, waiting for a few words to jump out. While many phrases were significant, the final line of the Gospel, “And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age,” resonated most.

Since 2017, I have experienced memory loss, which has been initially diagnosed as mild cognitive impairment. When I read the words, “And remember,” God had my attention. Memory should never be taken for granted. Since my problems began, I have done my best to remember God’s love in the Eucharist, daily prayer and the others with whom I share my life. Jesus’ promise to be with us always strengthens and comforts me.

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In the Act of the Apostles, before Jesus ascends into heaven, he tells his disciples they will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon them. God wants so much to be with us that he will find his ways. We must let these great promises sink in. No matter what our circumstances, whatever difficulties we face, God is with us. We need to sit with these words, reading them slowly, again and again.

When you suffer, as we all will, remember to give God space, especially in your heart. Yours will be a powerful witness and lives will change, though you may know nothing about it. “Remember, I am with you always.”

*Harry McAvoy
Newmarket, ON*

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Roman Missal p. 414; Sunday Lectionary p. 328

Entrance Antiphon (Acts 1.11)

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.

Introductory Rites (p. 5)

Collect

Gladden us with holy joys, almighty God, and make us rejoice with devout thanksgiving, for the Ascension of Christ your Son is our exaltation, and, where the Head has gone before in glory, the Body is called to follow in hope. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

or

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, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

First Reading (Acts 1.1-11)

In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the Apostles whom he had chosen. After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. “This,” he said, “is what you have heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?” He replied, “It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

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Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 47)

God has gone up with a shout, the
Lord with the sound of a trum - pet.

R. God has gone up with a shout,
the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.

or Alleluia!

Clap your hands, all · **you** peoples;
shout to God with loud songs · **of** joy.
For the Lord, the Most High, · **is** awesome,
a great king over · **all** the earth. *R.*

God has gone up · **with_a** shout,
the Lord with the sound of · **a** trumpet.
Sing praises to God, · **sing** praises;
sing praises to our · **King**, sing praises. *R.*

For God is the king of all · **the** earth;
sing praises · **with_a** Psalm.
God is king over · **the** nations;
God sits on his · **ho-ly** throne. *R.*

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Second Reading (Ephesians 1.17-23)

Brothers and sisters: I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power.

God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come.

And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the Church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation (Matthew 28.19, 20)

Alleluia. Alleluia. Go make disciples of all nations; I am with you always, to the end of the age. **Alleluia.**

Gospel (Matthew 28.16-20)

The Lord be with you. **And with your spirit.**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted.

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of

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all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Profession of Faith (p. 9)

Prayer of the Faithful

The following intentions are suggestions only. There are more suggestions at www.livingwithchrist.ca

R. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For the Church, community of disciples entrusted with authority and power to witness to the name of Jesus, we pray to the Lord: R.

For all leaders and teachers in the Church, we pray to the Lord: R.

For the poor and unemployed, at home and abroad, who need our encouragement and our help, we pray to the Lord: R.

For our parish community, called to act and speak courageously as we spread the Good News, we pray to the Lord: R.

Preparation of the Gifts (p. 11)

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.**

Preface (*Ascension, p. 14*)**Communion Antiphon** (*Matthew 28.20*)

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.**

Solemn Blessing — Ascension (*Optional*)

Bow down for the blessing.

May almighty God bless you, for on this very day his Only Begotten Son pierced the heights of heaven and unlocked for you the way to ascend to where he is. **Amen.**

May he grant that, as Christ after his Resurrection was seen plainly by his disciples, so when he comes as Judge he may show himself merciful to you for all eternity. **Amen.**

And may you, who believe he is seated with the Father in his majesty, know with joy the fulfillment of his promise to stay with you until the end of time. **Amen.**

And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

Dismissal (*p. 29*)