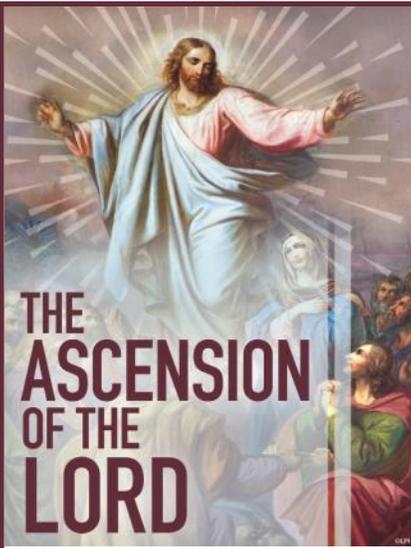


## Sunday Reflection

May 24, 2020

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Once I heard someone say, "Goodbyes are not forever. Goodbyes are not the end. It simply means, I'll miss you."

The entirety of the Ascension story has not been told during this Sunday's Gospel, but if you go back and read the whole story, you will learn that in the Gospel, the apostles witnessed that the person for whom they've put their total trust and confidence is about to leave them, "While He was blessing them, He withdrew from them and was carried up into Heaven". (Lk 24:51).

In a way, the disciples were happy for Jesus because He was going back to His Father, but at the same time, they felt sad because their beloved teacher will no longer be with them.

However, Jesus assured His disciples that He will be with them until the end of time with His parting words, "I am with you always until the end of the age."

There's an old adage that goes, "When one door closes, another one opens."

In other words, with Jesus' Ascension into Heaven, the Holy Spirit descended upon His disciples to guide, give counsel, and help them face and overcome challenges. "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" (Acts 1:4b-5).

The question then is this," What is the significance of Christ's Ascension for you and me today?

Before He was carried up into Heaven, Jesus' last few words to His disciples were, "Go into the whole world, 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."

Simply put, as Christians, by virtue of our own Baptism, we too are being sent to preach the Gospel to all. As present day disciples, we have the responsibility and obligation to ensure that the good news of the Gospel is heard throughout the world.

In the Gospel, we heard Jesus summoned His disciples to spread the Gospel, but this time His words are addressed not only to the disciples of His time but to us as well, all the baptized—followers of Jesus in this present day and age.

Being a Christian is not only a privilege, we also have the responsibility to help others know, love and follow Jesus.

The Holy Father Pope Francis has repeatedly said that the joy of the Gospel impels us to proclaim it with all our strength, with all our will, and with all our heart.

Nowadays, we need courageous disciples to preach the good news especially during this time when the world is confronted by so many uncertainties brought by the coronavirus pandemic. We now have been restricted by the shelter-in-place directives for more than eight (8) weeks, but as always, our prayers will go a long way. God has been very faithful to His people in the past. I'm confident that His love and providence will remain with us during this difficult and challenging time.

My friends, the world needs disciples who will preach the good news not only through words but more importantly through their actions.

That's why, "Watch your thoughts, they become your words; watch your words, they become your actions; watch your actions, they become your habits; watch your habits, they become your character; watch your character, it becomes your destiny" (Margaret Thatcher).

God bless you all!