



faith FORMATION

ST. JUDE CATHOLIC CHURCH // VOLUME 1 // ISSUE 36 // MAY 18, 2023

The
Ascension
of the Lord

In the Beginning...

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In the Gospel reading for The Ascension, we read of the Great Commission. Jesus commands the Apostles to make disciples of all nations. Through our baptism, we receive the same commission.

The idea can seem daunting. How can I go out and make disciples of all nations? The answer is a lot simpler than we may realize. It starts at home and in our everyday lives. We can be witnesses of the Catholic faith through our actions. Quite often, actions convince more than words.

A great way to help make disciples of all nations is by helping to plant seeds in the lives of our youth. At St. Jude, we are looking for volunteers to help out with Children's Liturgy of the Word ("Sunday School" at the Sunday 10:30am Mass), we'll need a 3rd grade catechist in the Fall and, more urgently, we need several volunteers to help out with Vacation Bible School which will be in July.

If you're signing up a child, you can receive a 50% discount off their registration fee if you volunteer for the entire program. Please register today!

<https://stjudes.net/vbs/>

St. Jude Vacation Bible School
Children aged 4 - 5th grade join us
JULY 24-28 9am – 12 noon

Register your children NOW

Sign up @

<https://stjudes.net/vbs/>

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Contact Janet DeBoe at: jdeboe@stjudes.net



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Also, by appointment

Daily Mass

Tuesday: 8:30AM
Thursday: 8:30AM
Friday: 8:30AM

Weekend Mass

Saturday: 4:00PM
Sunday: 8:30AM, 10:30AM

SUNDAY LITURGY REFLECTION

By Scott Hahn

Readings:

[Acts 1:1-11](#)

[Psalm 47:2-3, 6-7, 8-9](#)

[Ephesians 1:17-23](#)

[Matthew 28:16-20](#)

[LISTEN HERE](#)



In today's First Reading from the Acts of the Apostles, St. Luke gives the surprising news that there is more of the story to be told. The story did not end with the empty tomb, or with Jesus' appearances to the Apostles over the course of forty days. Jesus' saving work will have a liturgical consummation. He is the great high priest, and He has still to ascend to the heavenly Jerusalem, there to celebrate the feast in the true Holy of Holies.

The truth of this feast shines forth from the Letter to the Hebrews, where we read of the great high priest's passing through the heavens, the sinless intercessor's sacrifice on our behalf (see [Hebrews 4:14-15](#)).

Indeed, His intercession will lead to the Holy Spirit's descent in fire upon the Church. Luke spells out that promise in the First Reading for the feast of the Ascension: "in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit" ([Acts 1:5](#)). The Ascension is the preliminary feast that directs the Church's attention forward to Pentecost. On that day, salvation will be complete; for salvation is not simply expiation for sins (that would be wonder enough), but it is something even greater than that. Expiation is itself a necessary precondition of our adoption as God's children. To live that divine life we must receive the Holy Spirit. To receive the Holy Spirit we must be purified through Baptism.

The Responsorial Psalm presents the Ascension in terms familiar from the worship of the Jerusalem Temple in the days of King Solomon: "God mounts his throne to shouts of joy: a blare of trumpets for the Lord" (Psalm 47). The priest-king takes his place at the head of the people, ruling over the nations, establishing peace.

The Epistle strikes a distinctively Paschal note. In the early Church, as today, Easter was the normal time for the baptism of adult converts. The sacrament was often called "illumination" or "enlightenment" because of the light that came with God's saving grace (see, for example, [Hebrews 10:32](#)). Saint Paul, in his Letter to the Ephesians, speaks in terms of glory that leads to greater glories still, as Ascension leads to Pentecost: "May the eyes of your hearts be enlightened," he writes, as he looks to the divinization of the believers. Their "hope" is "his inheritance among the holy ones," the saints who have been adopted into God's family and now rule with Him at the Father's right hand.

This is the "good news" the Apostles are commissioned to spread—to the whole world, to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem—at the Ascension. It's the good news we must spread today.

"Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. 17 And when they saw him they worshiped him; but some doubted. 18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."

MATTHEW 28:16-18

The Gospel at Home

THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

Gospel Reading:

Matthew 28:16-20

Jesus charges his disciples to make disciples of all nations and promises to be with them forever.

Background on the Gospel Reading

Today's Gospel is taken from the conclusion of the Gospel of Matthew. Matthew's Gospel quickly moves from the disciples' discovery of Jesus' empty tomb, to Jesus' appearance to Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, to the commission that Jesus gives his disciples in today's Gospel.

The Final Commission, as this Gospel is sometimes called, is given on the mountaintop. Throughout Scripture, the most important events happen on the mountaintop, and Matthew has used this motif throughout his Gospel. Earlier in Matthew's Gospel, Peter, James, and John had seen Jesus transfigured on the mountaintop (Matthew 17:1-8). Also in the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus taught the crowds from the mountaintop in what we now call the Sermon on the Mount.

Here we are told that the eleven disciples go the mountaintop in Galilee, as Jesus had instructed through Mary Magdalene and the other Mary (cf. Matthew 28:9-10). They see Jesus, and both worship and doubt at the same time. Jesus approaches them and commissions them to baptize and teach, "to make disciples of all nations." It is a task which Jesus had previously prepared his disciples for; recall that Jesus had sent the twelve apostles to preach the Kingdom of God and to heal (cf. Matthew 10:1-15). However, earlier the Twelve were sent only to the House of Israel; in this Final Commission, the eleven are told to go to "all nations." The mission of Jesus is now to be taken to all people; the task now is to baptize and to teach.

Jesus commissions his disciples to baptize in the name of the Trinity, one of the clearest attestations found in Scripture for baptism in the name of the Trinity. In the Acts of the Apostles and in the Letters of Paul, baptism is more frequently offered "in the name of Jesus."

The ending of Matthew's Gospel can be understood as the beginning of the Church. Jesus commissions his disciples to continue to teach in his name and to bring others into the community of disciples through baptism. The Gospel ends, as it had begun, with the promise that Jesus will continue to be Emmanuel, "God with us" (cf. Matthew 1:23), for all eternity.

Family Connection

Just as Jesus sent his disciples to make disciples, our family, the domestic Church, is called to bear witness to the life of discipleship. That act of witnessing can take many forms. First and foremost our family should call people to discipleship by the example of our love for one another. That example is only the beginning; our love must extend beyond the family, reaching out to others and to the world.

Together with your family, identify one or more ways in which your family lives the life of Christian discipleship. Thank God for the blessing of the opportunity to be able to show God's love. Then read together today's Gospel, Matthew 28:16-20. Discuss what Jesus sends his disciples to do. Work together to identify one or more ways in which your family would like to do a better job bearing witness to the life of discipleship. Choose one of those ways and work together to make it happen. Pray as a family for the grace to be witnesses to the world of the life of discipleship. Pray together the Lord's Prayer.

"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, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age."

MATTHEW 28:19-20

Did You Know?

Ascension vs. Assumption: What is the difference?

The words "ascension" and "assumption" may appear to describe similar actions, but there is a major difference between the two.

In the Catholic Church there are two feasts, one called the "Ascension of Jesus" and the other called the "Assumption of the Virgin Mary." While both these words indicate going up into heaven, in reality there exists a major difference.

Ascension of Jesus

The Catholic Encyclopedia gives a succinct definition of this first event: *"The elevation of Christ into heaven by His own power in presence of His disciples the fortieth day after His Resurrection."* The key phrase in this definition is "by His own power."

Jesus is God, and that means when he returned to Heaven, he did so through his own abilities and not by any outside force. He was the cause of his ascension, proving again that he is God.

Assumption of the Virgin Mary

On the other hand, the assumption of the Virgin Mary is quite different. She was taken up to Heaven by God's power and not her own. The Catechism of the Catholic Church gives a brief description.

"Finally the Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all stain of original sin, when the course of her earthly life was finished, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as Queen over all things, so that she might be the more fully conformed to her Son, the Lord of lords and conqueror of sin and death." The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin is a singular participation in her Son's Resurrection and an anticipation of the resurrection of other Christians. (CCC 966)

She was not the being that raised herself to Heaven. God Himself raised her to be with Him. It is an important difference, as it recognizes the nature of each individual: Jesus is God and Mary is not.



Source:
[Aleteia](https://www.aleteia.org/)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Opportunities to Grow in Faith

Saturday, May 20:

4:00pm - Mass

Sunday, May 21:

8:30am - Mass

10:30am - Mass

Monday, May 22:

7:30pm - Bible Study on the Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary in the Kelly Conference Room.

Tuesday, May 23:

7:00pm - Men of Emmaus in the Millennium Conference Room.

Wednesday, May 24:

8:30am - Senior Men's Group in the Thaddeus Center.

St. Jude Vacation Bible School

Children aged 4 - 5th grade join us

JULY 24-28 9am – 12 noon

Register your children NOW

Sign up @

<https://stjudes.net/ubs/>

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Contact Janet DeBoe at: jdeboe@stjudes.net



WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED IN A GRANDPARENTS MINISTRY?

The Catholic Grandparents Association is a global organization of the faithful, with a mission to help pass on the faith and keep prayer in the heart of family life. We would like to get a chapter going right here at St. Jude!

For more information, please go to the website:

www.Catholicgrandparentsassociation.org.

If you are interested in helping organize or joining this ministry, please contact Diane Brewster at 616-648-0515 or email at dianembrewster@gmail.com.

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS AND LECTORS NEEDED: St. Jude is in need of Eucharistic Ministers and Lectors at the weekend Masses. You would be assigned on a rotating basis at your preferred Mass time. Please prayerfully consider these ministries. For more information, please contact Linda Parks in the Parish Office (lparks@stjudes.net or 616-363-6885).

SACRISTANS prepare the altar before the priest celebrates Mass. We are looking for a few people who would be able to assist for Masses on weekends and other liturgies (Holy days, funerals, weddings, etc.). For more information, please contact Linda Parks (616-363-6885 or lparks@stjudes.net).

"Jesus replied,
'The first is
this: 'Hear, O
Israel! The Lord
our God is Lord
alone! You shall
love the Lord
your God with
all your heart,
with all your
soul, with all
your mind, and
with all your
strength.'"

MARK 12:29-30

Confession

Saturday: 2:00 - 3:30PM

Also, by appointment

Daily Mass

Tuesday: 8:30AM

Thursday: 8:30AM

Friday: 8:30AM

Weekend Mass

Saturday: 4:00PM

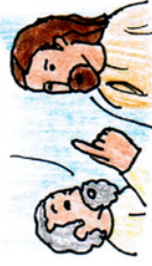
Sunday: 8:30AM, 10:30AM

The Ascension is one of the great



At the same time, doesn't it seem a bit sad that Jesus left? Well, He knew it was time for His disciples to start working on their own. It was kind of like having someone there to help you learn to ride a

But Jesus didn't go away and leave us without any help. Nine days after He went into Heaven He sent the Holy Spirit, who would help and guide His followers.



YES... WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO NOW?

Answers to True or False:

www.thekidsbulletin.com

The Kids' Bulletin

Feast of the Ascension

AGBOCDDMEOFUGNHTHSJHK
ILSMTNHORPOQNRSTTOUS
VHWOXUYTZAQBFCDJDOEYF

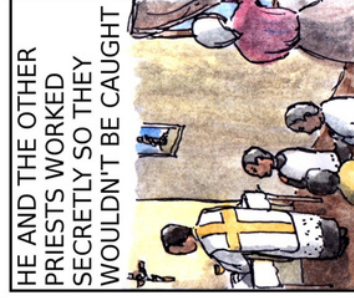


What does today's Psalm say about the Ascension?
Use every other letter from the box of letters above
to fill in the blanks below.

6

Saint Cristobal

May 21

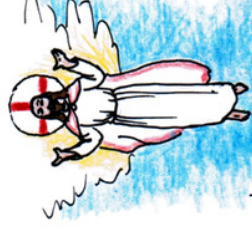


SAINT CRISTOBAL WORKED TO HELP HIS FELLOW MEXICANS TO LIVE A BETTER LIFE. WHEN THE GOVERNMENT TRIED TO STOP THE CHURCH, HE KEPT WORKING ANYWAY. WE CAN LEARN FROM HIM THAT HELPING PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY IN THEIR FAITH, IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN HAVING A NICE SAFE LIFE.

True or False about... The Ascension

How well do you know the story of the Ascension?
See if you know which of these are true and which are false:

1. Jesus appeared to His disciples for forty days after He rose from the dead. True or false?
2. When Jesus was with His disciples after He rose from the dead, they could only see Him but they couldn't touch Him. True or false?
3. Jesus didn't tell His friends that He was going to leave them. True or false?
4. Jesus promised that He would send the Holy Spirit. True or false?
5. The disciples had gathered together and asked Jesus if He was going to restore the earthly kingdom. True or false?
6. Nobody saw Jesus rise into the sky and disappear into a cloud. True or false?



7. Two men appeared to the disciples and said, "Men of Galilee, why are you looking at the sky?" True or false?