

FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Brothers and Sisters



Each Sunday we profess through the Creed “He ascended into Heaven.” The Feast of the Ascension has been called the Miracle of Hope. Jesus invites us to place all our hope in His Promise - that He will send us the Holy Spirit to be our consoler and healer, opening our hearts to become the very presence of the Risen Lord.

The Biblical accounts of the Ascension focus not so much on the details of the event as on the mission Jesus gave to his disciples.

“Christ has opened the way to heaven for us” (Catechism of the Catholic Church #661). “Jesus Christ, the head of the Church, precedes us into the Father’s glorious kingdom so that we, the members of his Body, may live in the hope of one day being with him forever” (CCC #666). “Jesus Christ, having entered the sanctuary of heaven once and for all, intercedes constantly for us as the mediator who assures us of the permanent outpouring of the Holy Spirit” (CCC #667).

The Ascension message is: "Preach the Good News and be my witnesses:" Matthew, Mark, and Acts record Jesus’ last words differently: 1) “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” (Acts 1:8). 2) “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19). 3) “Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation” (Mark 16:15). All are in agreement that (a) Jesus gave the disciples a mission of bearing witness by preaching and living the Good News.

They are to tell and re-tell the story of Jesus' life, suffering, death, and Resurrection. (b) He assured them of the Divine assistance of the Holy Spirit in the carrying out of this mission. (c) He instructed them to baptize the believers: “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, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” (Mt 16: 19-20).

Jesus gives this mission to all the believers: "Go out to the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature." This mission is not given to a select few but to all believers. To be a Christian is to be a proclaimer and an evangelizer. There is a difference between preaching and proclaiming. We preach with words but we proclaim with our lives. As we celebrate the Lord’s return to His Father in Heaven – His Ascension -- we are being commissioned to go forth and proclaim the Gospel of life and love, of hope and peace, by the witness of our lives. On this day of hope, encouragement, and commissioning, we are recommissioned to be disciples, "living in a manner worthy of the call we have received.

Happy Easter.

Fr. Sean