

EASTER 2014

THE
ASCENSION
OF JESUS
JUNE 1,
2014



THE ASCENSION OF JESUS PREPARES US

During the seven Sundays of the Easter Season we share the stories of the risen Christ. The Ascension marks the final appearance of Jesus to the disciples and indicates how he sends them forth.

Every year the Church walks through the life of Jesus. Each Sunday we are given a part of the Gospels that speak of his teaching, his healing miracles, his strong life of compassion and his death and resurrection. This is not a historical retelling of the life of Jesus.

What must happen is that the life and mission of Jesus is deepened within the life of the believer and the life of the Church. This is not a matter of adding quantity (how many times we have gone through the Gospels) but rather a matter of quality (how much the Gospels are lived and practiced among us). The Gospels of Jesus always stretch the people of the Church forward. They were never given to make us feel secure and comfortable. They are directions for people on the move towards God.

As an example of what must never happen, we go back to the experience Eleanor (in Eastern Canada) had on Palm Sunday. As the Passion of Jesus was being proclaimed the woman next to her pulled out her cell phone and started working on her emails. Eleanor leaned over and said: "This is the Passion of Jesus!" The woman with the cell phone in her hand said, "I heard it last year!"

It is just the opposite which must happen in our churches.

The sharing of the Gospel is always new. How does this apply to my own life? Our life as a faith community? Maybe this is the season when the school board is decided to close your district elementary school down and bus the children to the next school in the district.

Now what does the Word of God bring to your life situation?

EASTER IN US



Today stand with the disciples as they are given the command of Jesus to 'Go to the whole world.'

Feel in your feet that you are a part of a much bigger reality: God's work to change the people of the world into the very goodness of God." You are living and breathing something much bigger.

ASCENSION IS JESUS IN THE IMPERATIVE

Bernard, who was always honest about his own strengths and shortcomings, identified that "getting to know the Bible has put my faith in the right track.

"The center of our faith is the death and resurrection of Jesus. The Ascension of Jesus is the final appearance of the Risen Jesus but it is preparation for the giving of the Holy Spirit in Pentecost. But it is the 'now' moment of each event that has opened my eyes.

"This is not Jesus sending his disciples forth but it is Jesus sending us forth into our world to be the Good News of God. The command of Jesus must be heard right now. Here and now! Today's feast of the Ascension is all about how Jesus sending us into the world."

The Gospel reading for Ascension (Mt. 28, 16-20) spells out where the disciples (that is, us) are supposed to go.

Jesus is clear about his divine authority and his position as God. "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me." (Mt. 28, 18) This is the very Godhead directing us.

Go to the whole world. Go everywhere. Make no distinctions between peoples (the Jewish religion that the disciples knew was filled with distinctions). This was the radical breakthrough of Jesus. Everyone counts and everyone is acceptable to God. Every human being has been made in the very image of God. Every human being has value to God.

Jesus speaks in the imperative: "Go." There are no 'have a committee meeting and see if you agree' or 'you might want to or you might decline the offer.' The tone and the message is clear. Go forth. Bring God's goodness to the entire world. newly baptized called the people of the Church to grow in their faith.



May he be risen in your good deeds

When Jesus commands the disciples to ‘baptize’ then he is not referring to a simple ceremony done in church buildings for babies. He means the original meaning of the word. Plunge them into the very mystery of God and of God’s redeeming work. Plunge them into the love and compassion that God has for the world. Plunge them in peace making that burns within the very heart of God.

In simple terms, join them to the mission and the person of Jesus Christ. Join them to become like Jesus in all things.

At the place of your work five days a week, be the face of Jesus to the newcomers to Canada. Be alert to their needs to know the Canadian ways and be patient with their learning time. Treat your fellow workers as God treats them. Have the same attitude within your heart as God has for these new people.

Go means go! Make it real! Make me tangible in your hands and your words. May your actions speak that Jesus is alive and risen in your life!

THE ASCENSION

by Lucien Dies

Jesus Christ,
Lord glorified on high,
look with love upon your
brothers and sisters on
earth.

Your ascension is the
hope
of our future glory,
and your presence near
your Father
announces our own
entrance into the eternal
dwelling.

We pray to you:
let the desire for
heavenly realities
not make us neglect our
work on earth.

Let our hope for the
future
inspire in us a respect
for the present moment.

Let your ascension into
heaven move us
to make your glory dwell
on earth.

EASTER IN US



Today, mark the Ascension of Jesus with his words, “Go.”

This is not a time for the people of the Church to sit down and get comfortable.

Go to the forgotten elderly and the shut-ins. Be that moment of human kindness and concern for people who might not see anyone but the care giver of their nursing home.

PRAYERS FLOWING FROM ASCENSION



PRAYER THAT FOLLOWS THE ASCENSION OF JESUS

God alone can give faith.

But I can give witness.

God alone can give hope.

But I can give confidence to others.

God alone can give love.

But I can teach others how to love.

God alone can give peace,

But I can be a means of God's peace.

God alone is the light,

But I can make it shine for others.

God alone is the life,

But I can give meaning to other's life.

God alone can do the impossible,

But I can do what is possible.

God alone is self-sufficient.

But God chooses to need me.

**Almighty God,
make our hearts
dance with joy and
thanksgiving; for in
the ascension of
Christ your Son,
our human nature
is raised above the
heavens, and
where Christ the
Head has gone
before his glory
we, His Body, are
called in hope**

MAKE THE WORDS OF THE RISEN CHRIST YOUR OWN THIS SUNDAY

“Go, and make disciples of
all nations, baptizing them

in the name of the Father,
and of the Son and of the
Holy Spirit” *Mt. 28, 19*

“Teach them to obey
everything that I have
commanded you.”

Mt. 28, 20

“Remember I am with you
always, to the end of the
age.” *Mt. 28, 20*