

## **MORNING MEDITATION**

### **THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD**

**Dear Lord, grant us the gift of serenity as we search for your will and purpose for us.**

#### **Acts 1:1-11**

Luke tells us that the Holy Spirit empowered the Church to continue where Jesus had left off at his death. Jesus had asked the apostles to wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit filled them with courage and strength to proclaim the risen Lord and to live the life which Jesus called them to live.

**We will experience courage and strength if we learn to wait, to be still...to wait for being strengthened by the presence and movement of the Holy Spirit.**

The disciples asked Jesus, "Are you going to restore the rule to Israel now". They had misunderstood the message of Jesus about the kingdom. They thought in terms of an earthly reality, in political terms. Jesus had to change their concepts.

This excerpt from Acts tells us that his disciples needed the Holy Spirit to teach them and empower them to carry on his mission. Jesus trusted the disciples with his mission and empowered them to continue and fulfill his mission.

**Today, it is up to us to continue the mission of Jesus in and through the Holy Spirit. Rejoice in being trusted with the mission of Jesus and be faithful.**

#### **Psalm 47**

Psalm 47 was probably composed for the ascend of the king to his throne. Hence the use of this psalm for the feast of Ascension. It must have been part of a colorful and dramatic celebration. The choirmaster or master of ceremonies invites the assembly to rejoice, "clap your hands. Shout to God... God reigns over the nations.....kings of the nations belong to God, he is to be greatly exalted!

As the human king ascended to his throne, the assembly sang the praises of God because it is God who brought them to the Promised Land. The human king is only "God's silly vassal" as Andrew Melville told King James. However, the human king is the Lord's anointed! So his ascend on earth dramatized on earth the ascend of God to his throne. So the assembly shouted, "The Lord is King" of all nations and people!

**All you peoples, clap your hands,  
Shout to God with cries of gladness.  
For the lord, the most high, the awesome,  
is the great king over all the earth.**

### **Ephesians 1:17-23**

The author of this letter has a prayer for us that we may enjoy the knowledge of God here and now, that we may be empowered with Holy Spirit, that we may be enlightened, that we may know God as God is, that we may be blessed with wisdom and understanding....

**Make this passage from Ephesians your prayer for the week.**

### **Mathew 28:16-20**

Mathew tells us in this passage that Jesus commissioned his disciples to go forth in the power of God their Father, in the name of the Son their redeemer and inflamed by the love of the Spirit to share with the world what they had experienced and to Baptize, to immerse the world into the mystery God's life and love.

Jesus claimed that full authority had been given to him in heaven and earth and it is this authority that he shared with his disciples. He commissioned them with his own mission just as his father had commissioned him. We are called to continue and fulfill this mission today.

It is amazing to remember that Jesus called and trusted his men to be his witnesses and sent them with his mission of bringing good news to the world. Today, we, with all our limitations and inconsistencies are trusted with this good news and called to bring this good news of Jesus to the world.

This is an amazing story...this is the story of an end and a beginning that was continuous, that merged...an end that ran into a beginning and a beginning that grew out of an end. This is the story of the ascension of the Lord, which is the story of "continuity" and not break from what they had come to know and experience. This is the story of the Church being called, sent and empowered to continue what Jesus began. It is the story of Jesus asking the disciples to become more fully involved. It is the story of the disciples being empowered to live and to share the good news of Jesus. The feast of Ascension calls us to wait and remain open to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit and be empowered to fulfill the mission of Jesus.

**Be still! Wait patiently! Wait with open arms, minds and hearts! May the Holy Spirit fill you with all the gifts you need to fulfill your mission in life!**

**Saint of the Day, May 17 - Saint Paschal Baylon and 10 other saints are remembered this day.**

Paschal Baylón was born into a poor and devout family on May 16, 1540 at Torrehermosa, in the Kingdom of Aragon, Spain. He spent his childhood and adolescence as a shepherd. He carried a book with him into the fields where he watched the sheep, and asked those that he met to teach him the letters, and so, in a short time, he learned to read. He was honest, prayerful, and generous to the poor giving a good part of his dinner to the poor. Some of his companions were much inclined to cursing, quarrelling, and fighting; but learnt to hold their tongue in his presence since they respected his pious nature and his virtue.

In 1564 he joined the Reformed Franciscans as a religious brother and made his religious profession on February 2, 1565 and spent most of his life as a humble doorkeeper. He was encouraged to become an ordained priest, but he felt that was not the path for him. He lived his vow of poverty to its extreme possessing only one habit, walking without sandals in the snow and rough roads, content with little and cheerful in all situations.

His jobs included serving as a cook and porter as well as the gardener and the official beggar who went around asking for alms. He lived his life in contemplation and silent meditation and often did this as he worked. He would spend the whole night before the altar in silence to commune with God and to meditate on the faith. He died on May 17, 1592 and was canonized on October 16, 1690.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs