

# **MORNING MEDITATION**

## **The ASCENSION OF THE LORD**

**Thank You Lord for your kindness and forbearance  
toward my ignorant indiscretions and unwise choices.**

### **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.

**Learn to wait, to be still...to wait for being strengthened by the presence and movement of the Holy Spirit.**

In this excerpt, Luke recalls the questions which 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.**

**Be grateful and rejoice in being trusted with the mission of Jesus and be faithful.**

### **Psalms 47**

This Psalm 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 all his readers: 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; and that we may be blessed with wisdom and understanding.

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

### **Mark 16:15-20**

In verse 16:14, we read about Jesus taking the disciples "to task for their disbelief and their stubbornness since they had not put faith in those who had seen him after he had been raised".

In verse 15, the first verse of this excerpt of today, we read about Jesus trusting the same men with all their "disbelief and stubbornness" and sending them with his mission of bringing good news to the world.

**It is amazing to remember that Jesus called and trusted his men with all their "disbelief and stubbornness" 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 sent to bring this good news of Jesus to the world.**

This is the story of the ascension of the Lord, 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 continue 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 12 - St. John Jones and 25 other saints are remembered this day**

John Jones was born in Wales into a Welsh family, who had remained faithful Roman Catholics throughout the Protestant Reformation. He was ordained a diocesan priest and was imprisoned in the Marshalsea under the name Robert Buckley from 1582 to about 1585 for administering the sacraments. By summer 1586 he was out on bond, but in 1587 confined at Wisbech Castle. He left England, either escaped or exiled, in 1590 and at the age of sixty joined the Conventual Franciscans at Pontoise. Afterwards he went to Rome, where he lived among the Observant Friars of the Ara Coeli. After a time he was sent back by his superiors to the English mission. He reached London towards the end of 1592, and stayed temporarily at the house which Father John Gerard, S.J., had provided for missionary priests. He ministered to Catholics in the English countryside until his arrest in 1596.

In 1596 the 'priest catcher' Richard Topcliffe was informed by a spy that Father Jones had visited two Catholics and had said Mass in their home. It was later shown that the two Catholics were actually in prison when the alleged offense took place. Regardless, Jones was arrested, severely tortured and scourged.

Following his torture, Jones was imprisoned for nearly two years. During this time Jones helped sustain John Rigby in his faith, who later also became one of the Forty Martyrs of England and Wales. On July 3, 1598 Father Jones was tried on the charge of "going over the seas in the first year of Her majesty's reign (1558) and there being made a priest by the authority from Rome and then returning to England contrary to statute". He was convicted of high treason and sentenced to be hanged, drawn and quartered.

The execution was delayed by about an hour because the hangman forgot to bring a rope. Jones used the time to preach to the people and answer their questions. When the time came to draw away the cart, the hangman whipped the horses; but they were held back by three or four fellows till Jones had finished what he was saying. John Jones' dismembered remains were fixed atop poles on roads leading to Newington and Lambeth. His remains were later reputedly removed by at least two Catholic Englishmen, one of whom suffered a long imprisonment for this offense. He was canonized on October 25, 1970 by Pope Paul VI as one of the Forty Martyrs of England and Wales, who are commemorated on that date.

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