

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Mt 28:19, 20  
Alleluia, alleluia! Go and teach all people my gospel. I am with you always, until the end of the world. Alleluia!

GOSPEL Mt 28:16-20  
P. The Lord be with you.  
R. And with your spirit.  
P. A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.  
R. Glory to you, O Lord.  
All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

The eleven disciples set out for Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had arranged to meet them. When they saw him they fell down before him, though some hesitated. Jesus came up and spoke to them. He said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you. And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.’

The Gospel of the Lord.  
R. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

HOMILY

PROFESSION OF FAITH APOSTLES’ CREED  
Or the Nicene Creed may be said.  
I believe in God, / the Father almighty, / Creator of heaven and earth, / and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, / who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, / Aorn of the Virgin Mary, / suffered under Pontius Pilate, / was crucified, died and was buried; / he descended into hell; / on the third day he rose again from the dead; / he ascended into heaven, / and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; / from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. / I believe in the Holy Spirit, / the holy catholic Church, / the communion of saints, / the forgiveness of sins, / the resurrection of the body, / and life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST  
After the priest raises the paten with the bread and prays, and then the chalice, we respond to each prayer:

R. Blessed be God for ever.  
P. Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters), that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.  
R. May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS  
P. We offer sacrifice now in supplication, O Lord, to honour the wondrous Ascension of your Son: grant, we pray, that through this most holy exchange we, too, may rise up to the heavenly realms. Through Christ our Lord.  
R. Amen.

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER  
P. The Lord be with you.  
R. And with your spirit.  
P. Lift up your hearts.  
R. We lift them up to the Lord.  
P. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
R. It is right and just.

PREFACE I OR II OF THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD  
After the Preface, we sing or say:  
All: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

THE MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION  
P. The mystery of faith.  
All: We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

COMMUNION RITE  
P. At the Saviour’s command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:  
All: Our Father, who art in heaven ...  
P. Deliver us, Lord, we pray...  
All: For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and for ever.  
P. Lord Jesus Christ, who said...  
R. Amen.  
P. The peace of the Lord be with you always.  
R. And with your spirit.  
P. Let us offer each other the sign of peace.  
All exchange a sign of peace.

LAMB OF GOD  
All: Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION  
P. Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.  
R. Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON Mt 28:20  
Behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age, alleluia.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION  
P. Almighty ever-living God, who allow those on earth to celebrate divine mysteries, grant, we pray, that Christian hope may draw us onward to where our nature is united with you. Through Christ our Lord.  
R. Amen.

THE CONCLUDING RITES  
P. The Lord be with you.  
R. And with your spirit.  
P. May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit.  
R. Amen.  
P. Go forth, the Mass is ended.  
R. Thanks be to God.

REFLECTIONS ON THE GOSPEL  
UNFINISHED BUSINESS, ... BUT HOPE

Having escaped the clutches of his enemies by rising from the dead, the Lord ascends, like the prophet Elijah, to heaven.  
In biblical language and imagery this manner of describing the close of Jesus’ earthly ministry signals that the One who had been crucified on the trumped-up charge of being a political Messiah has now entered into his true messianic glory at God’s right hand.  
This entrance into heavenly glory does not mean that Jesus abandons either his disciples or his saving mission in the world. Rather, he will continue to exercise that mission through the ministry of the Church, empowered (at Pentecost) by the same Spirit that rested upon him.  
Just before he departs, the disciples voice an understandable concern: ‘Lord, has the time come? Are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel?’ The query betrays a strong sense of ‘unfinished business’. Despite the Easter victory, forces hostile to God and to true humanity continue to hold sway in the world – as the disciples, and we ourselves, remain acutely aware.  
Jesus does not give a direct answer. The time of the Kingdom’s full arrival remains shrouded in the mystery of God. The disciples’ task, meanwhile, is to take up the messianic mission of Jesus, bringing the hope of the resurrection to an often despairing world.  
The Ascension is not, then, simply something that happened to Jesus. As the Preface of the Mass says so well, he ‘has passed beyond our sight, not to abandon us but to be our hope; where he has gone, we hope to follow’.

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OUR SUNDAY CELEBRATION  
The Ascension of the Lord / A 24 May 2020

I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS. When Christ ascended into heaven he did not abandon his disciples. Matthew’s Gospel begins with the angel’s words that Jesus will be called Emmanuel, which means God-is-with-us, and it ends with Jesus’ promise: ‘Know that I am with you always, yes, to the end of time.’ In a special way Emmanuel is with us in this Eucharist for ‘where two or three are gathered in my name, I shall be there with them.’

INTRODUCTORY RITES  
ENTRANCE ANTIPHON Acts 1:11  
Men of Galilee, why gaze in wonder at the heavens? This Jesus whom you saw ascending into heaven will return as you saw him go, alleluia.

GREETING  
P. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
R. Amen.  
P. The Lord be with you.  
R. And with your spirit.

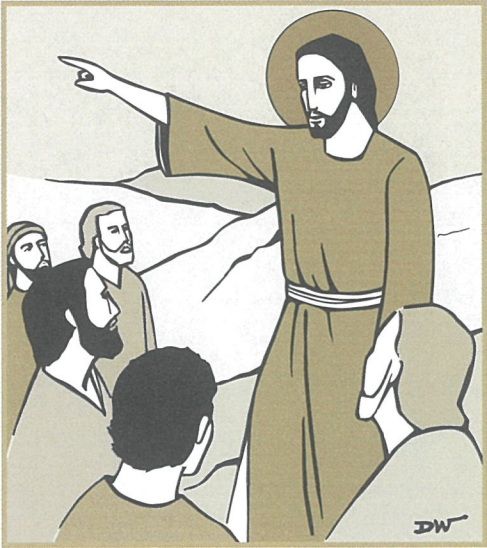
PENITENTIAL ACT  
P. Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.  
P. Lord Jesus, you are the image of the unseen God: Lord, have mercy.  
R. Lord, have mercy.  
P. Your are the first born of all creation: Christ, have mercy.  
R. Christ, have mercy.  
P. You are the head of the body, the Church: Lord, have mercy.  
R. Lord, have mercy.  
P. May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.  
R. Amen.

GLORIA  
Glory to God in the highest, / and on earth peace to people of good will. / We praise you, / we bless you, / we adore you, / we glorify you, / we give you thanks for your great glory, / Lord God, heavenly King, / O God, almighty Father. / Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, / Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, / you take away the sins of the world, / have mercy on us; / you take away the sins of the world, / receive our prayer; / you are seated at the right hand of the Father, / have mercy on us. / For you alone are the Holy One, / you alone are the Lord, / you alone are the Most High, / Jesus Christ, / with the Holy Spirit, / in the glory of God the Father. / Amen.

COLLECT  
P. Gladden us with holy joys, almighty God, and make us rejoice with devout thanksgiving, for the Ascension of Christ your Son is our exaltation, and, where the Head has gone before in glory, the Body is called to follow in hope. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.  
R. Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD  
FIRST READING Acts 1:1-11  
A reading from the Acts of the Apostles  
Why are you standing here looking into the sky? Jesus has been taken into heaven.

In my earlier work, Theophilus, I dealt with everything Jesus had done and taught from the beginning until the day he gave his instructions to the apostles he had chosen through the Holy Spirit, and was taken up to heaven. He had shown himself alive to them after his Passion by many demonstrations: for forty days he had continued to appear to them and tell them about the kingdom of God. When he had been at table with them, he had told them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for what the Father had promised. ‘It is’ he had said ‘what you have heard me speak about: John baptised with water but you, not many days from now, will be baptised with the Holy Spirit.’  
Now having met together, they asked him, ‘Lord, has the time come? Are you going to restore the kingdom of Israel?’ He replied, ‘It is not for you to know times or dates that the Father has decided by his own authority, but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and then you will be my witnesses not only in Jerusalem but throughout Judaea and Samaria, and indeed to the ends of the earth.’  
As he said this he was lifted up while they looked on, and a cloud took him from their sight. They were still staring into the sky when suddenly two men in white were standing near them and they said, ‘Why are you men from Galilee standing here looking into the sky? Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven, this same Jesus will come back in the same way as you have seen him go there.’  
The word of the Lord.  
R. Thanks be to God.



RESP PSALM Ps 46:2-3, 6-9. R. v. 6  
R. God mounts his throne to shouts of joy: a blare of trumpets for the Lord. (or Alleluia!)  
1. All peoples, clap your hands, / cry to God with shouts of joy! / For the Lord, the Most High, we must fear, / great king over all the earth. R.  
2. God goes up with shouts of joy; / the Lord goes up with trumpet blast. / Sing praise for God, sing praise, / sing praise to our king, sing praise. R.  
3. God is king of all the earth. / Sing praise with all your skill. / God is king over the nations; / God reigns on his holy throne. R.

SECOND READING Eph 1:17-23  
A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians  
He made Jesus to sit at his right hand in heaven.  
May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give you a spirit of wisdom and perception of what is revealed, to bring you to full knowledge of him. May he enlighten the eyes of your mind so that you can see what hope his call holds for you, what rich glories he has promised the saints will inherit and how infinitely great is the power that he has exercised for us believers. This you can tell from the strength of his power at work in Christ, when he used it to raise him from the dead and to make him sit at his right hand, in heaven, far above every Sovereignty, Authority, Power, or Domination, or any other name that can be named, not only in this age, but also in the age to come. He has put all things under his feet, and made him as the ruler of everything, the head of the Church; which is his body, the fullness of him who fills the whole creation.  
The word of the Lord.  
R. Thanks be to God.