

# Ascension of the Lord

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QUEEN OF PEACE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY  
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## 1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Acts 1:1-11

-But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem.

## Psalm 47

All you peoples, clap your hands, shout to God with cries of gladness, for the Lord, the Most High, the awesome, is great king over all the earth.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: Ephesians 1:17-23

May the eyes of your hearts be enlightened, that you may know what is the hope that belongs to his call, what are the riches of glory in his inheritance among the holy ones, and what is the surpassing greatness of his power for us who believe...

## Gospel: Mark 16:15-20

Jesus said to his disciples: "Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature."

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Today is the Feast of The Ascension of the Lord. To some, it would seem like the end; Jesus who walked and talked and ate and drank; Jesus who laughed and cried with them; has departed from us.

Do you remember how Jesus began his ministry? Jesus was a working class man from an inland country town. He was thirty years old. He called out to a couple of fishermen: "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men!!" These were grown men too, experienced fishermen, and what did the fishermen do? They immediately put down their livelihood and followed this "land lover." Isn't that amazing? What they were able to do is also amazing. Still today, how few answer his call!

Jesus had an incredible ability to excite people, causing them to take their minds and heart and lives in totally new directions. It is interesting that after nearly every encounter Jesus had, the person would go and tell everyone they could what they had seen and heard.

The woman at the well ran to her village and told everyone and brought her whole Samaritan town to Jesus, a Jew! The man who was blind testified to

the leaders in the synagogue at great personal risk. Even when Jesus told them not to tell anyone, they went out and spread the word. People just couldn't help themselves. Jesus was too good to keep quiet about. Everyone he touched was driven by a desire to draw others into the experience they had.

At last, here was someone who knew something. The people had been told that God judged harshly and punished severely; now Jesus was saying God loved each person like a parent loves a child. Imagine the "average Joe" discovering that God knew every hair on his head and loved him personally. Jesus even spoke of the Father as loving the prodigal son. The only ones who objected were the people who thought God's love was exclusively their blessing.

I heard the story of a woman who was invited to a party and asked to bring chicken salad. She resented it. She thought, "the rest only have to go out and buy some soft drinks or napkins while I have to prepare the whole meal." When she got to the party, she saw a huge spread, with all sorts of plentiful dishes. She realized she wasn't asked so she would bring chicken salad, she was asked so she could come and enjoy someone else's specialty. In fact she went overboard on the chocolate cake!

It is so easy to be like that woman, so afraid of being taken advantage of, or of not having enough, or some other slight in a situation that we miss the opportunity of our lives. You remember Jesus called Lazarus out of that tomb. When Lazarus came out, his feet and hands were bound up in those burial clothes. Jesus said "Unbind him and let him go!" That's what he says to us as well. Loosen up. Free yourself of those preconceived notions of inferiority. Your Abba loves you. You are invited to the great banquet of life. Jesus will transform covetousness into gratitude. Jesus will transform insecurity into generosity. Jesus will transform anxiety into confidence. How can we possibly not share the good news!

This is the feast of the Ascension. The Word made Flesh has taken with him what he was to such an extent that he himself, Jesus of Nazareth, abides forever. The absolute logos shall look at me in eternity with the face of a man.

As St. Paul wrote in Ephesians *May the eyes of your hearts be enlightened, that you may know what is the hope that belongs to his call, what are the riches of glory in his inheritance among the holy ones, and what is the surpassing greatness of his power for us who believe...* Jesus transforms lives. Our goal is to reach our full potential in Christ. In our own day and time, we commit ourselves to doing whatever it takes to reinvigorate the Church so that we will honor our Father, help change lives and spread the good news!