

**Ascension 2020 - Year A**  
**Mass Suspended due to Coronavirus**  
**On-Line Homily**  
**Acts 1.1-11///Eph 1.17-23///Matthew 28.16-20**

→Forty days have passed since the news erupted from Jerusalem that Jesus had risen from the dead...and close to seventy days have passed since we last gathered together to celebrate Mass.

→The disciples have verified that the tomb is empty; Mary Magdalene has told her story; two followers have encountered Jesus as they walked from Jerusalem to Emmaus; and the fishermen disciples have shared a meal of fish and bread on the seashore.

→For you and me, Easter and Mother's Day have passed; spring has arrived; and like the leaves on the trees and flowers in our gardens, we are slowly and cautiously emerging from a time of isolation and separation.

→And now, forty days after Easter, the Risen Lord gathers the disciples together to say good-bye and next week we will gather to say "hello!"

Today we celebrate the feast of the Ascension of the Lord!

→If you were to summarize up the lesson this feast teaches, it could be easily characterized in a single word for us -- "expectations!"

→And, if we were to define the word "expectation" I think it would be fair to say that an "expectation" is "the confident belief or strong hope that a particular **some thing or some event** will happen."

→That seems to be pretty accurate because all of us have expectations about many things: "expectations" of people, of God, of one another...

→We often have “*the confident and strong belief*” that a particular some **thing** will happen the way we want it too, or someone will do or act in a way that we want them too.

→At a closer look, the readings today and the meaning of this feast reveal in simple terms the “expectations” we have for God and that God has for us!

→In other words, today Jesus lives up to the “expectations” of his followers **and** he also reveals the “expectations” He has for you and me.

→Weeks have passed since the grief-weary women and Peter and the disciples discovered the empty tomb. In all the resurrected appearances of Jesus that we have been hearing about the common theme has been his witness to the love of God in the lives of people.

→God’s presence and love in our lives!

→The more time spent with Jesus, the more the disciples came to “expect” Jesus to be the Messiah, --the Savior, the chosen one of God.

→And by appearing to them alive after the crucifixion, the “expectations” of the disciples are witnessed and fulfilled.

→Today, Jesus not only fulfills their expectations but also imparts **His expectations** of them

→As he has loved...As he has forgiven...As he has lived...He tells his disciples and you and me that must we do the same.

→In simple terms, the Risen Lord’s expectation of them is the same for us.

→Today we are reminded once again that Jesus sends us out into the world just as HE was sent: as teachers, evangelists, and witnesses.

→We hear today the invitation of Jesus to proclaim the Gospel to everyone through our words and actions, our willingness and trust, being assured that he is with us always until the end of time.

→Jesus invites us to be his witness in Jerusalem, in Samaria, to the ends of the earth, and just around the corner in our community.

→When Jesus ascended to heaven, he left signs that would accompany those who believe: they would speak new languages; they would pick up serpents with their bare hands and not be hurt; they would lay hands on the sick and make them well.

→But there are other signs as well, maybe not as big or as dramatic, but every bit as powerful. Signs that you and I have been called to be, as we bring the gospel message to those in need; as we try to live the challenge of Christ; and as we strive to become more like Christ in our everyday routine lives.

→In simple terms, that is what God expects of us, to live as we have been taught by Christ.

→We almost always “expect” God to be there for us --to answer our prayers; to take care of us in times of need and despair; when we are struggling and faced with anxiety or trauma; and so it is only fair for God to “expect” something of us in return.

→And so maybe the real message for you and me today is to be aware of, not only our “expectations” of God, but God’s “expectations” of you and me!

→To realize the “expectation” that God has of us to live according to his message : to teach the Gospel; spread the message; to speak and act as members of His Body.

→And perhaps even more important: to determine if we are, indeed, living out and fulfilling those “expectations” God has of us.