

May 24, 2020  
The Ascension of the Lord  
**Acts 1:1-11**  
**Matthew 28:16-20**

Today's Activities & Tasks

- Read Today's Readings
- Sunday Homily from Fr. Brian Johnson
- Children's Bulletin
- Fr. Brian's Letter to Parishioners
- Message from Bishop Medley. Public Celebration of Mass began May 20<sup>th</sup>.
- Question(s) of the Week

St Pius-St Anthony Homily Ascension Sunday Year A

Welcome to Ascension Sunday? After forty days of continued teaching & ministering to and with the disciples, Jesus rises again in glory to be seated at the right hand of the Father. What does that mean? This might have been frustrating to the disciples: "Oh, another change to adapt to!" Maybe like being given new guidelines for Covid 19 operations, only to have them changed 7 hours later (but really anytime, that we're given more & better information, we need to change-constant updating). With Jesus and the disciples, let's review again what all they have been through recently. First, the traumatic torture & death of Jesus, on Good Friday-(What a shock to absorb-but okay, grieving maybe things will calm enough to get back a routine, & they are coming around and then Jesus is back Easter morning (different, but the same), AND now he is going off again, rising away into the heavens.

But this change in form, manner or way of relating to the disciples can make Jesus more present & available to them. Whether it is Himself or the Holy Spirit (same in the Divine Unity of Trinity), God is still going to be just as present to them. He says exactly that in so many ways-so many times. Just to mention a few: He says, "I will not leave you orphaned" (John 14:18), "I am with you always" (Mathew 28:20). "I am in you, and you in me" (John 14:20).

So how do we understand the need-fittingness of Jesus to ascend to the Father? Maybe it's like the story told about a nurse who was caring for a child in the hospital, and this nurse was so attentive & faithful. With almost every cough or repositioning in the bed the child made, the nurse was at the door, checking-looking in and asking if everything was okay. Well, as the unit floor received more and more patients, the nurse introduced the child to the call button on a cord and laid it beside the child's hand on the bed. She said, "If you need anything, please push the button." The child asked, "Why? You help me; What is this cord here connected to?" And the nurse said, "Me, I'm at the other end of it." Well, we know she is not tied to the other end of it (like the old soup-can wire telephone), but we get the drift of how she is 'connected', and maybe even more aware and present to the child's needs by the call button. There is a similarity here to how it fits and just makes sense that Jesus **needs to** ascend in glory and send back the Holy Spirit to be most effectively present to all his disciples. He Himself had said in John 16:7 "it is better for you that I go" so that He can then, send the Spirit to them. The key, is to understand that only through ascending, can Jesus then be universally present to all His followers.

To me Jesus' ascension in glory and His return in the Holy Spirit, makes sense because Spirit (other scriptural words for Spirit, being Wind-Breath-Voice) can be universally present. Spirit is not localized; particular in a limiting fashion or pegged to specific GPS coordinate, as every physical, spatial-geographical body would be constrained to or constricted by such fixity. In a way, Jesus addressed this a couple of times in his earlier gospel teaching, when He was asked about his second coming or final return/judgement day. In Matthew 24:26, after being asked the details of end of ages, Jesus says, "So if they say to you, 'He is in the desert,' do not go out there; if they say, 'He is in the inner rooms,' do not believe it." In Luke 17:23, asked about same thing, Jesus says, "There will be those who will say to you, 'Look, there he is,' or 'Look, here he is.' Do not go off, do not run in pursuit." Jesus is after a presence that is not 'boxed' limited to right here only.

While it may be true that some saints in our catholic tradition (like Padre Pio, St Francis Assisi, St John Vianney, St Francis Xavier) had the gift of bilocation (2 places at once), accessibility to Jesus is ubiquitous, everywhere-all the time. So Jesus is saying here that as with this figure (*use a prop of a figurine moved to different locations*) If I am here, then I can't be there-when in Rome, I am not in Athens (Can you tell I got Georgia on my mind?) So it makes perfect sense to me that for Jesus to be simultaneously present everywhere to His own, It will be in 'Spirit'. He says as much in Luke 17: 24 "For just as lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one side to the other, so will the Son of Man be in his day." Jesus seems to point to a

natural phenomenon of lightning (speed of light!) as a comparison to his own omnipresence. That encourages me to think of His ascent into heaven and the descent of the Holy Spirit as similar to the natural process of evaporation and condensation that occurs in water transfer from earth to sky and back, and back. For example, let's say I see a puddle (Haven't we see enough of them lately?) and before long the puddle has evaporated (water changed form), yet it has risen to then mingle in the skies with how many other droplets forming back into water through condensation (would that be clouds?) and then returns back to settle on earth-sea to prepare for another ascending and descending trip. I think this is what Jesus was telling Nathaniel way back in first chapter of John when Jesus told Him, "You will see great things with me, (Jn 1:51) you will see the sky opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man." The way is opened by Jesus, and He promises to be with us always (everywhere-all the time), and ascension is one more step with Him. Jesus is with us. Though His form-manner of proceeding with us may change, His Presence does not change; With us and for us, Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever. To bear with us, to heal and feed us, to take away our fear and worry, to hear our call and answer, "I am with you!"

## **Children's Bulletin:**

[file:///C:/Users/Paula/Documents/St%20Pius%20X/Website%20information/great\\_commission\\_bulletin%20Matthew%2028%2016-20.pdf](file:///C:/Users/Paula/Documents/St%20Pius%20X/Website%20information/great_commission_bulletin%20Matthew%2028%2016-20.pdf)

## **Letter to Parishioners**

Fr. Brian Johnson has written a letter to all our parishioners about returning to Mass. This letter outlines adjustments and adaptations we will need to follow during Mass. We look forward to seeing everyone.

However, if you have any reservations about attending public Mass, please stay at home, and, if possible, watch the Mass via our Facebook Live feed or another source available on television.

Please click on the link below to read Fr. Brian Johnson's letter to the parishioners:

**Letter to Parishioners**

# **Returning to Public Mass**

Bishop Medley has released a statement about the Diocese of Owensboro returning to public Mass. St. Pius X Parish in Calvert City and St. Anthony of Padua in Grand Rivers began to have public Mass on Wednesday, May 20, 2020 at 8:00am.

Please be patient as parish staff and volunteers prepare the church in accordance to the Bishop's guidelines. Please read or view Bishop Medley's announcement from our Diocese's website:

## **Returning to Public Mass** **Announcement**

### **Question(s) for the Week**

Will you be attending Mass this week?

If so, when will you likely attend?

Please use the comment section below  
to send in your answer.

Thank you!!

