

Ascension 2019 - Year C
Acts 1.1-11///Heb.9.24-28;10.19-23///Luke 24.46-53

→Forty days have passed since the news erupted from Jerusalem that Jesus had risen from the dead....

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

→and now, forty days after Easter, the risen Lord gathers the disciples together to say good-bye...PAUSE

...today we celebrate the feast of the Ascension of the Lord...

→I think if you were to sum up the lesson the Feast of the Ascension teaches....it could be summed up in a single word for you and me.... “expectations”

→....and if we were to define the word “expectation”I think it would be fair to say that

→“expectation”.....is the confident belief or strong hope that a particular **“some thing or some event”** will happen....(*repeat*)

→and that is certainly true...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

→and 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.

→i.o.w today...Jesus lives up to the expectations of his followers **and** he also reveals the expectations he has of you and me

PAUSE

→weeks have passed since the grief-weary women, and Peter and the disciples discovered the empty tomb

--and in all the resurrected appearances of Jesus we have been hearing about over the past few weeks...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...

→And in doing so, 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....so must we do the same....

→[in simple terms] the Risen Lord's expectation of them...is the same for you and me as well.

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

PAUSE

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

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

→and 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 they would get 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 called to be about.....as we bring the gospel message to those in need...

→as we ourselves try to live the challenge of Christ
--and as we strive to become more like Christ in our every day routine lives.

PAUSE

→in simple terms...that is what God expects of you and me....to live as we have been taught by Christ

→[you know]...we almost always expect God to be there for us...to answer our prayers...to take care of us in times of need, in times of despair, when we are struggling and faced with anxiety or trauma....

→and so it is only fair that God' expects something of us in return

→and so maybe the real message for you and me today is be aware of not only our expectations of God....but God's expectations for 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.