



Saint Mary MacKillop Parish Western Border

Comprising the communities of Apsley, Balmoral, Costerton, Coleraine, Dunkeld, Edenhope, Glenthompson, Goroke, Hamilton, Harrow, Macarthur, Peshurst and Tarrayoukyan.

The Ascension of the Lord, Year A

24 May 2020

First Reading Acts 1:1-11

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 to 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.'

Responsorial 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*

(R.) 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

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.

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

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 commandments I gave to you. And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.'



Reflection by Greg Sunter

The short gospel passage for today is taken from the final words of the gospel of Matthew. It is known as 'The Great Commission' as Jesus is portrayed commissioning his disciples to go out to the world and spread the good news. They are charged to 'Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations.' This is the basis of much of the missionary work of the Church that has gone on ever since then.

However, the focus of today's feast is much more on the first reading than the gospel. The opening verses of the Book of Acts, from the author of Luke-Acts, describe the final instructions of Jesus to his disciples and then his 'lifting up'. The Luke-Acts writer is the only gospel writer to actually describe the Ascension. The fact that the other gospels don't discuss the Ascension in any detail at all is a good indication that this description should not be taken literally.

However, the message of the Ascension is a powerful one. It reminds us that Jesus, the human incarnation of God on earth, was limited to a specific time and place in history. Despite the physical limitations of his life on earth, Jesus ensured that his message and ministry would continue through those he had taught. Knowing that the disciples would need time to grieve and come to terms with all that had occurred in a relatively short space of time, Jesus promised that the Spirit would come upon them in the days to come. That visiting of the Spirit upon the disciples at Pentecost was the motivation to set about doing what Jesus had charged them to do. Without the Ascension, there is no Pentecost.

The psalm responses are from the English Translation of the Lectionary for the Mass ©1981 International Committee on English in the Liturgy (ICEL). All rights reserved. The psalm texts from The Psalms, A New Translation, ©1983 by The Guild, England and used by permission of the publishers. The scriptural quotations are taken from the Jerusalem Bible, published and copyright 1956, 1957 and 1968 by Darton Longman and Todd Ltd and Doubleday & Co Inc, and used by permission of the publishers.
© 2017 Creative Ministry Resources Pty Ltd
All use must be in accordance with your user licensing agreement.

We acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we stand, the Gunditjmara people.

Parish Priest: Fr Patrick Mugavin
patrick.mugavin@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Western Area: Fr George Kuruvila
george.kuruvila@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Parish Manager: John Hockey
manager@westernborder.church

Parish Secretaries: Carolyn Stanhope & Kymhan Watson
admin@westernborder.church

Liturgy: Noreen McLeish
noreenm@westernborder.church

Priest in residence: John Mckinnon
john.mckinnon@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Parish Contact Details:

Phone: 03 5571 1161 SMS to Email: 0437 194 523
Office Open Hours: 9am—4pm Tues to Fri

Email: admin@westernborder.church
Website: www.westernborder.church
Office Address: 23 Dinwoodie St, HAMILTON

Reconciliation (Confession): By appointment 55711161.

We are a Child Safe Parish.

Child Safe Officer: John Hockey 0439 319 823

<http://westernborder.church/child-safe-policy-and-protocol/>

ST MARY'S PRIMARY, HAMILTON
Principal: Mrs Terrielynn Groves
Phone: (03) 5551 9000

ST JOSEPH'S PRIMARY, PENSURST
Principal: Mr Matthew Uzkuraitis
Phone: (03) 5576 5438

MONIVAE COLLEGE, HAMILTON
Principal: Jonathan Rowe
Phone: (03) 5551 1200

Local Parish Mass Online



Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri & Sun.

Go to **YouTube** and search for;
"St Mary's Hamilton"

Or



@westernbordercatholicparish

Masses St Mary's Hamilton



If you would like to attend a small Mass on a Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri or Sat @ 10am please contact the office to register your interest and we will schedule you in.
Email: admin@westernborder.church
Phone: 5571 1161



LAUDATO SI' WEEK 2020



<https://youtu.be/DHlzOWp8ZQY>

2020 - It's the fifth anniversary of *Laudato Si'*

Pope Francis invites you to celebrate *Laudato Si'* Week which takes place May 16-24.

The theme for the week is "everything is connected."

Pope Francis has invited Catholics all around the world to reflect, pray and join to take action during this week. Go to the diocesan website for further information, which includes the Catholic Earth care media release and a wide variety of resources www.ballarat.catholic.org.au

Priests Support (1st Collection)

Credit or debit card online;

<https://westernborder.breezechms.com/give>
or by Telephoning the Parish Office on 5571 1161.

Electronic Funds Transfer

BSB: 083-663 Acc: 51-580-8981

Reference: Priests Support

Post a cheque to;

St Mary MacKillop Parish
23 Dinwoodie St, HAMILTON VIC 3300

Stewardship (2nd Collection)

Credit Card or Direct Debit

Telephoning the Parish Office on 55711 1161 or
emailing to admin@westernborder.church

Electronic Funds Transfer

BSB: 083-663 Acc: 01-715-7303

Reference: Your Name

Post a cheque to;

St Mary MacKillop Parish
23 Dinwoodie St, HAMILTON VIC 3300

Our Collections

1st—Priest Support:

\$77,586 YTD (\$84,936 Same Period Last Yr.)

2nd—Stewardship

Pledged: \$141,438 Given YTD: \$118,594

Western Border Parish Mission Outreach

Mission Donations made financial year to date.

Sr Lourdes—Kenya Mission \$3,250

Sr Stella's—India Mission \$6,660

Saint Mary MacKillop Parish

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS:

Deaths:

Anniversary:

Arthur Turner, Dulcie Lovett, Margaret Quinn,
Pearlie Rowe, Ian Roberts, Jack Fisher, Helen
Brown, Joan Jones, Fr Laurie Gallagher, Jean
Riddle, Glennis Ryan.

SICK:

Heather Healy, William Hockey, Diane Barrera,
Samuel Jones, Adrian Lyon, Hazel Perdido
Soares, Jack Handley, John O'Brien, Emilie
McIntyre, Judy Bowden.

Prayer

God of all creation,
Whose mighty power raised Jesus from
the dead, be present to this community
of disciples whom you have called to
the hope of a glorious inheritance
among the saints.

Strengthen us in the power of the Spirit
to go and make disciples of all nations,
to obey everything that Jesus has
commanded us, and to know that he is
with us until the end of the age,
interceding before you on our behalf,
living and reigning with you in the unity
of the Holy Spirit,
God for ever and ever.

AMEN.

**In this
together**

**National Reconciliation Week
2020**

27 MAY – 3 JUNE

Making Sense of the Ascension

This Sunday we celebrate the Ascension, the day Jesus left the Earth. I think a lot of us would like to have him back. But Jesus did leave and gave us the Spirit. Was that a fair trade?

If you could choose between having Jesus present today or having the Spirit, which would you choose? I think that for most Christians, it would be no contest. Most of us would give up a lifetime with the Spirit for five minutes with Jesus. We want Jesus; we can skip the Spirit.

And yet if that is what we believe, then we really did not understand the Gospels; we really did not understand Jesus.

The feast of the Ascension celebrates letting go of the physical Jesus and preparing for the arrival of the Spirit on Pentecost. We don't want to do this any more than the apostles did when, at the Last Supper in John's Gospel, Jesus tells them that he must go. He must go so that he can send the Spirit.

Jesus tells his disciples in chapter 16 of John, "It is better for you that I go," because otherwise, the Spirit will not come. "But if I go, I will send him to you."

The disciples reply, in essence, "Forget the Spirit, we want you to stick around."

I think our response today would be the same. But Jesus says that it is better for us if we have the Spirit. Why is that?

I think it's because no matter how close we get to him, Jesus is always external, whereas the Spirit is within us. To put it another way, it's the choice between having Jesus or being Jesus.

It is the Spirit that makes us Jesus, makes us the body of Christ. It is the Spirit that gives us life and fills us with love. That is why Jesus must leave so that he can send the Spirit. It is not enough for us to be with Jesus; we must become Jesus, and we can only do that with the power of the Spirit.

I think our problem is that we don't know how to recognize the Spirit's presence in our lives. I think we experience the Spirit's presence not just at special moments, but every day of our lives. We just don't recognize it. If we truly believe that God is Love, as the Scriptures tell us, then every time we experience love, we experience the Spirit.

Every child who has a loving parent, has experienced the Spirit.

The faithful love we experience from friends and spouses is an experience of the Spirit. The innocent and trusting love of children is a sign of the Spirit. Whenever we feel impelled to love, it is not just hormones; it is the power of the Spirit.

People who risk their lives to care for COVID-19 patients are filled with the Spirit. Those who dedicate their lives to justice and peace or to protecting Mother Earth are impelled by the Spirit.

In his 2016 apostolic exhortation, Amoris Laetitia, Pope Francis said that he saw the presence of the Spirit in the women's movement when it worked for equality and the rights of women.

You might say, "This doesn't sound like the Spirit; this is all very human." I would argue that what is most human, what is most truly human in us, is the presence of the Spirit. The Spirit is present in everyone, calling us to be more than we ever thought we could be. Only the Spirit gives us the power to love unselfishly, to sacrifice ourselves for another, to commit ourselves with fidelity in good times and in bad, to put justice above our own advantage.

[Jesuit Fr. Thomas Reese is a columnist for Religion News Service and author of Inside the Vatican: The Politics and Organization of the Catholic Church.]