

THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD (C)

Collect

Grant, we pray, almighty God, that we, who believe that your Only Begotten Son, our Redeemer, ascended this day to the heavens, may in spirit dwell already in heavenly realms. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

1st. READING (Acts 1, 1-11)

In the first part of my work, heophilus, I wrote of all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning until the day when he ascended to heaven. But first he had instructed through the Holy Spirit the apostles he had chosen. After his passion, he presented himself to them, giving many signs that he was alive; over a period of forty days he appeared to them and taught them concerning the Kingdom of God. Once when he had been eating with them, he told them, "Do not leave Jerusalem but wait for the fulfilment of the Father's promise about which I have spoken to you: John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit within a few days." When they had come together, they asked him, "Is it now that you will restore the Kingdom of Israel?" And he answered, "It is not for you to know the time and the steps which the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, even to the ends of the earth." After Jesus said this, he was taken up before their eyes and a cloud hid him from their sight. While they were still looking up to heaven where he went, suddenly, two men dressed in white stood beside them and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand here looking up at the sky? This Jesus who has been taken from you into heaven, will return in the same way as you have seen him go there."

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 47)

Clap your hands, all you peoples; acclaim God with shouts of joy./For the Lord, the Most High, is to be feared;/he is a great king all over the earth./God ascends amid joyful shouts,/the Lord amid trumpet blasts. Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises! God is king of all the earth;/sing to him a hymn of praise./For God now rules over the nations,/God reigns from his holy throne.

2nd. READING (Eph 1,17-23)

May the God of Christ Jesus our Lord, the Father of Glory, reveal himself to you and give you a spirit of wisdom, that you may know him. May he enlighten your inner vision, that you may appreciate the things we hope for, since we were called by God. May you know how great is the inheritance, the glory, God sets apart for his saints; may you understand with what extraordinary power he acts in favour of us who believe. He revealed his almighty power in Christ when he raised him from the dead and had him sit at his right hand in heaven, far above all rule, power, authority, dominion, or any other supernatural force that could be named, not only in this world but in the world to come as well. Thus has God put all things under the feet of Christ and set him above all things, as head of the Church which is his body. He who fills all in all unfolds his fullness in the Church.

GOSPEL (Lk 24,46-53)

Jesus said to his disciples: "You see what was written: the Messiah had to suffer and on the third day rise from the dead. Then repentance and forgiveness in his name would be proclaimed to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. Now you shall be witnesses to this. And this is why I will send you what my Father promised. So remain in the city until you are invested with power from above." Jesus led them almost as far

as Bethany; then he lifted up his hands and blessed them. And as he blessed them, he withdrew (and was taken to heaven. They worshiped him). They returned to Jerusalem full of joy and were continually in the Temple praising God.

Prayer over the Offerings

We offer sacrifice now in supplication, O Lord, to honor the wondrous Ascension of your Son: grant, we pray, that through this most holy exchange we, too, may rise up to the heavenly realms. Through Christ our Lord.

Prayer after Communion

Almighty ever-living God, who allow those on earth to celebrate divine mysteries, grant, we pray, that Christian hope may draw us onward to where our nature is united with you. Through Christ our Lord.