



Small Groups

Parish Community of Saint Helen

Sunday, May 21, 2023
Ascension Sunday

Opening Song

[Raise a Hallelujah ~ Saint Helen Band](#)

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus,

we celebrate your Ascension!

We thank you that you have not left us orphans,
because you remain with us to the end of time.

May we always be glad

when we think of the many ways you are with us:

in the Eucharist,

in your Word,

in one another,

in your ministers.

May we respond to your presence

by keeping your commandments, above all,

to love one another as you loved us!

Amen

First Reading

Acts 1:1-11

In the first book, Theophilus,

I dealt with all that Jesus did and taught

until the day he was taken up,

after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit

to the apostles whom he had chosen.

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He presented himself alive to them
by many proofs after he had suffered,
appearing to them during forty days
and speaking about the kingdom of God.

While meeting with the them,
he enjoined them not to depart from Jerusalem,
but to wait for “the promise of the Father
about which you have heard me speak;
for John baptized with water,
but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

When they had gathered together they asked him,
“Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”
He answered them, “It is not for you to know the times or seasons
that the Father has established 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,
and to the ends of the earth.”

When he had said this, as they were looking on,
he was lifted up, and a cloud took him from their sight.
While they were looking intently at the sky as he was going,
suddenly two men dressed in white garments stood beside them.
They said, “Men of Galilee,
why are you standing there looking at the sky?
This Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven
will return in the same way as you have seen him going into heaven.”

Gospel

Mt: 28:16-20

The eleven disciples went to Galilee,
to the mountain to which Jesus had ordered them.

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When they saw him, they worshiped, but they doubted.
Then Jesus approached and said to them,
“All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me.
Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations,
baptizing them in the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,
teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.
And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”

Reflection: [Weekend Message ~ Fr. Juan Gabriel](#)

Discussion Questions

1. As the disciples watched Jesus being lifted up to heaven, do you think that they would have been tempted to feel abandoned and panicked about their risen Lord leaving the earth?
2. Think of a time in your life when you felt as if Jesus had abandoned you. How can Jesus' promise of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5,8) bring you comfort at such a time?
3. At the end of the 1st reading the two men dressed in white garments say, “Men of Galilee, why are you standing there looking at the sky?” Do you ever find yourself standing in wonder?
4. The Ascension reminds us to GO.. to go and continue the mission of Jesus Christ. We are called to discipleship! Where do you feel called to witness?
5. As you think about Jesus' commissioning of the disciples, what holds you back from passing on the Good News of Jesus Christ?
 - a. Feeling like I don't know enough
 - b. Feeling like I don't have time
 - c. Feeling like other's are better at it
 - d. Other... please share

Closing Prayer

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Ask for the group intentions ~ *Lord hear our prayer* after each

Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning,
is now,
and ever shall be,
world without end.

Amen.

Closing Reflection Song [I Could Sing of Your Love Forever](#)