

Ascension of the Lord, Year A, Intermediate

Submitted by lectionaryadmin on Wed, 06/15/2016 - 20:00

Intermediate Session

Acts 1:1-11

Matthew 28:16-20

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

Dear Jesus, you have returned to your Father to prepare a place for us.

Help us to continue your mission on earth.

In your name we pray.

Amen.

Opening Life Reflection

The theme for today is the Ascension of Jesus. To begin, invite the children to reflect on a time when they were away from the people who love and care for them. Ask them to recall how happy they were to see their loved ones again. Discuss:

- What is it like for you when someone you love goes away for a while?
- How does it feel when they return?
- How do you think the disciple's felt when Jesus told them he was going away?
- Why does Jesus tell his friends that he will always be with?

Allow time for discussion. This Sunday we celebrate Jesus' return to his Father, the Ascension of the Lord. Jesus promised not to leave his followers alone. Jesus is always present with us.

Listen to the Word of God

In the first reading from Acts of the Apostles listen to find out how Jesus returns to his Father.

Read Acts 1:1-11.

Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- What happens when the risen Jesus appears to his disciples?
- How does Jesus return to his Father?
- How will Jesus come again?

In the gospel listen to Jesus tell his followers that he will be with them always.

Read Matthew 28:16-20.

Allow for silence.

- Where does Jesus direct his disciples to go meet him?
- What does Jesus tell his disciples to do?
- How does Jesus assure his friends that he will always be with them?

Scripture Background

Provide 2-3 minutes of background information on the readings using the Catechist Background section.

In the first reading from Acts, Jesus meets with his disciples before he returns to his Father. The Risen Jesus has remained with his disciples for forty days since the Resurrection. Forty days is a symbolic number for the author of Acts, who also is believed to be the author of the gospel of Luke. We are reminded of how Jesus is sent into the desert for forty days in the gospel of Luke. After his resurrection, Jesus ate and drank with his disciples and spoke about the Kingdom of God. In today's passage, Jesus meets his friends on a mountain in Galilee. After this meeting Jesus is lifted up and taken into heaven.

Today's gospel presents the commissioning of Jesus' disciples to go out and bring about the Kingdom of God on earth. Jesus sends his followers out to preach and baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. They are sent to all people and to make disciples of all nations. Jesus tells his followers that he will remain with them always. With the power of the Holy Spirit, the disciples are commissioned to continue the mission of Jesus on earth.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

- Why does Jesus appear to his disciples after his resurrection?
- Why do Jesus' disciples want him to stay with them?
- How are Jesus' followers given the strength to go out and continue his work?

[If you are not going to continue with the doctrinal discussion, proceed to the Gospel in Life.]

Doctrinal Discussion Starters

"He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father" (Nicene Creed)

The Catholic faith teaches that after his resurrection, the Risen Jesus returned to his Father in heaven. We call this the Ascension of Jesus. The Ascension is part of the saving plan of God, which we call the Paschal Mystery. We show our faith in the Paschal Mystery at Mass when we sing, "Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again." Jesus has gone before us to open the way to eternal life with God. Our belief in the ascension of Jesus gives us hope that where Jesus has gone, we will follow.

- What is the Ascension of Jesus?
- What is the Paschal Mystery?
- How does our belief in the Paschal Mystery give us hope?

The Gospel in Life

How can you share your belief in the Paschal Mystery with others this week?

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