



a Kendall Hunt Company

Ascension of the Lord, Year A, Junior High - RCLB Lectionary



Junior High Session

Acts 1:1-11

Matthew 28:16-20

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

Loving God, you have entrusted us to continue the work of your son Jesus.

Strengthen us with the gift of your Holy Spirit.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.

Opening Life Reflection

The theme for today is the Ascension of Jesus. To begin, invite the youngsters to reflect on their lives, and think of a time when they were left on their own to accomplish something. Invite them to share with a partner their experience and how they got through it. Discuss with the large group:

- What tasks or chores are you responsible for at home?
- Have you ever felt overwhelmed?
- What helps give you the assurance that everything will be okay?
- How were Jesus' disciples able to go on after Jesus ascended into heaven?

Allow time for discussion. On this Sunday we celebrate the Ascension of the Lord. The ascension of Jesus into heaven reminds us that we are not left alone. God is with us as we continue the work of Jesus on earth.

Listening 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

- For how long after his death does the risen Jesus appear to his disciples?
- How does Jesus return to his Father?
- How are the disciples assured that things will be okay?

In the gospel today, listen to how Jesus commissions his followers to go out and make disciples.

Read Matthew 28:16-20.



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Allow for silence.

- Where does the Risen Jesus appear to his disciples?
- How does Jesus tell his followers to go out and make disciples?
- How does Jesus assure his friends that they will not be left alone?

Scripture Background

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

In today's 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 after 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.

This 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 continue to appear to his disciples for forty days after the resurrection?
- Why do Jesus' disciples want him to remain with them always?
- What does Jesus commission his followers to go out into the world to do?

[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 the 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?
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- How is the Ascension part of God's saving plan?
- Why is our belief in the Ascension of Jesus a source of hope?

The Gospel in Life

How can you be a sign of hope for others this week?

