

Breaking Open the Word: Gratitude in Witness

Feast of the Ascension: 29 May 2022

WE READ, LISTEN and SHARE:

For Today's Readings, **Acts 1:1-11** and **Ephesians 1:17-23** can be read or simply read the Gospel **Luke 24:46-53**.

While someone reads the Scripture(s), listen well. BE AWARE OF THE IMAGE BEING PAINTED, OR THE STORY BEING TOLD. DOES THE STORY OR THE IMAGE CALL TO MIND ANYTHING SIMILAR IN YOUR OWN LIFE EXPERIENCE? After the reading, share your impressions of the reading(s):

- ✓ *What influence should our Faith life have on our work, study, or relate to the world around us?*
- ✓ *What Scripture figure or action by Biblical people could be goals to emulate - incarnate?*

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After important and impactful events in our lives, it is good to go and sit and spend time reflecting on what has transpired. Often, we are too taken up by the events to do so. The Feast of the Ascension is one of those Liturgical moments to sit and be still. The author of Acts writes, **[Jesus] enjoined them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for "the promise of the Father about which you have heard me speak."**

- ✓ *When was the last time you took a pause to reflect on the action of the Spirit of the Living God in your life?*
- ✓ *What's that saying? **The unreflective life is an unlived life!** What could that mean to/for you?*
- ✓ *What comes up when you catch yourself reflecting about life's events? Can you/Have you ever connected the reflective moment with the question of how you "got here?"*
- ✓ *How has/could this reflection give you the courage to address an issue, fear, hope or expectation?*

Paul, to the community in Thessalonica, writes, **May the eyes of your hearts be enlightened... [may you] know what is the hope that belongs to his call, what are the riches of glory in his inheritance, ...**

- ✓ *Mention a time when you were, all of a sudden, taken over by a memory which opened itself to making sense? Care to share it (or journal it)?*
- ✓ *How did that breakthrough, or newer understanding, influence subsequent decisions?*

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Luke, authoring the Readings this week calls us twice (in Acts) and in his Gospel to be still and reflect before acting. **You are witnesses of these things. And behold I am sending the promise of my Father upon you...stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.**

- ✓ *Luke puts an interesting spin on the coming of the Spirit: **I am sending the promise of my Father.** How do you connect this idea of "the promise of the Father" with "the Holy Spirit?" Suddenly, it is not just that the Spirit is Promised, but that the Spirit IS the Promise. Sit with that a bit.*
- ✓ *As **witnesses**, how are we/you called to carry **the promise (aka Spirit) of the Father?***

PRAYER OF THANKS AND PRAISE

All: We thank you for the leadership of Francis our pope and for the pastoral ministry of our bishop **N**.

Leader: Keep them safe and healthy.

All: We ask that inspire the life and ministry of our pastor **N**, and Deacon(s) **N**, (**N**),

Leader: who serve our larger faith community.

All: We recognize you in and thank you for our family, **Leader:** both near and far.

Leader: You teach us the value of community and mutuality **All:** in our friends and neighbors.

Leader: As your life's witness challenges us to open our eyes to the poor to be leaven in the world,

All: may we learn to understand and respond to the signs of the times and live in the light of faith.

Leader: Being devoted in serving the Gospel, **All:** open our eyes to respond to the needs of all.

Leader: By sharing the grief and pain of others **All:** may we help heal division and strife.

Leader: By sharing the joy and hope of others **All:** may we be the Good News of Trust and Hope.

All: We remember the people who have died in this Pandemic. **Leader** May they be in your Peace.

Leader: For what else do we pray:

Conclude with the Our Father.

Leader: Peace be with you all!

All: In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen!