



ONLY THE BEGINNING

(LUKE 24:46-53)

Fresco of the Ascension of Jesus, in side apse of the Church of St Wenceslas, Prague

Luke tells us in today's gospel reading of Jesus' final meeting with his disciples. Once again Jesus reminds them that all that has happened to him was written down in the Hebrew Scriptures and therefore was the will of God.

During his ministry, Jerusalem was the focus of his journey, the place where his destiny and God's salvation would be accomplished. Now, the holy city will become the hub from which the Gospel will spread out to the world, and the disciples will be responsible for this. Jesus promises them the gift of the Spirit which they will receive when Jesus sends it.

When they go to Bethany, Jesus confers on them the blessing which Zechariah was unable to give to the people in the Temple at the beginning of Luke's narrative, then we are told simply that he "was carried up to heaven". The disciples do not see any reason to break with their ancestral religion and practices and continue to frequent the Temple for worship. Thus ends Luke's Gospel; but this is by no means the end of the story. Jesus' outreach and ministry will continue, but now through his disciples, empowered as they will be by the Holy Spirit. The last report we have of them is that they are "continually in the Temple, praising God". We have heard throughout Luke's narrative that this is the proper reaction to Jesus' works of power; it is therefore a fitting conclusion to the entire earthly life and ministry of Jesus. ■

SAY

Christ has passed beyond our sight, not to abandon us but to be our hope.

(Preface of the Feast of the Ascension)

LEARN

The Ascension tells us that Jesus now enjoys a glorified life in God's presence.

Luke gives two accounts of this event: the first at the end of the gospel, on the day of the discovery of the empty tomb;

We find the second at the beginning of the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, which is set 40 days later.

The first version brings to an end the appearances of the risen Jesus to the disciples; the second is more related to the coming of the Spirit.

DO

When you are in a lift or on an escalator, think about Jesus being taken up to heaven and think about where you imagine him to be now.



REFLECT

Luke gives us two accounts, separated by 40 days, of the ascension of Jesus, which suggests that this event fulfils two literary functions. At the end of the gospel, it brings to an end the experience the disciples had of the risen Jesus, which we normally call the 'appearances', and the version at the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles is more connected with the coming of the Spirit in the dramatic recounting of Pentecost, which Luke alone relates.

The Ascension teaches an essential lesson about the Easter mystery. If we had only the narratives concerning the circumstances around the empty tomb of Jesus, we might conclude that Jesus had been simply brought back to life, like Lazarus of Bethany or the son of the widow of Nain; he would have been restored to the existence which he had lost. The Ascension emphasises that Jesus has been taken up to God in glory and now enjoys a different kind of life with God. The two aspects are different

sides of the one coin, but the demands of telling a story require that we separate them.

Jesus' last act is to bless his disciples, who are most probably the larger group, including women, than just the twelve apostles. We can see this from the beginning of Acts and deduce it from the entry into Jerusalem, possibly the Last Supper and the accompanying of Jesus to Gethsemane. They are the ones awaiting Jesus' sending of the Spirit. ■



NEWSLETTER

29TH MAY 2022

A PARISH OF THE MULLINGAR DEANERY

Fr. Stan Deegan Tel: 044-9374127 0872673655.

Email: parishofkillucan@gmail.com

www.parishofkillucan.ie Facebook: Killucan Parish

The Community of St. Camillus 044 9374115.

ST. JOSEPH'S, RATHWIRE.

Saturday 28th, 6pm. Brigid & Michael Keenan.

Sunday 29th, 11.30am. Helen Carley.

ST. BRIGID'S, RAHARNEY.

Sunday 29th, 10am. Peggy & Mattie O'Keeffe. Maureen Mulkearns Hill & John Mulkearns & his son Kenneth also Peggy, Mary & Peter

Saturday 4th 6pm. Cathy & Kit McKeogh & Ned & Rose & Pat's daughter Caroline.

Weekday Masses; Tues & Thurs Raharney. Wed & Fri Rathwire.

MASS OFFERTORY COLLECTION: €649
PARISH DEVELOPMENT FUND €714

Adoration
of the
Blessed Sacrament



In St. Joseph's Tuesday 1pm-9pm.
& St. Brigid's Wed. 6pm-10pm:
*Special Diocesan intention of prayer
for vocations and the family.*
Take one Hour with the Lord

Cemetery Sunday: in Rathwire cemetery on Sunday June 19th at 3pm. There will be no 11.30am Mass in Rathwire on that day.

National Adoration Pilgrimage: in Knock on Sat 18th June. Bus leaves Raharney at 7.30am. to book call Ned 087 6635083/ Shay 0876471501.

Charity shop: at Rathwire church opens Tues, Thurs & Fri 11am – 1pm.

Vincent de Paul: invite new members in the area with the work. For info call 086 0706571

The Rosary will be recited at 7.30pm each Friday evening for the month of May, at the grotto in Raharney.

First Friday Calls: as usual this Friday.

Universal Synod 2021-2023

Following the engagement by so many people across the Diocese, the diocesan synthesis has been completed and will now be submitted to the National Steering Committee. The synthesis can be viewed on www.dioceseofmeath.ie from Wednesday 1st June.

Thanks to all who took part in the synodal conversations during Lent and to all who completed questionnaires and made submissions. Thanks to all priests and facilitators who organised the synodal meetings in each deanery.

As we approach the Feast of Pentecost, let us ask the Holy Spirit: "Teach us the way we must go, and how we are to pursue it".

Unity

"That they may be one, as we are one—I living in them, you living in me—that their unity may be complete." The goal of the entire paschal mystery, and Jesus' wish for all of us, is unity: that we may be one as Jesus and his Father are one.

Today's world is more characterized by division than by unity. We face off against each other as rich and poor. North and South, white and black, African and Asian, Jew and Arab, Christian and Jew, Catholic and Protestant, male and female, young and old, suburban and inner city, conservative and liberal.

Every once in a while, a Stephen comes along, someone so dedicated to the principles which can bring us together that he is willing to surrender his life for the cause. And of course, we gladly take it. Better to sacrifice a Martin Luther King or an Oscar Romero than to lose our favored position in society!

Come, Lord Jesus! Come with the life-giving water that will wash away our divisions and make our unity complete.

The Catholic Church considers it her duty to work actively so that there may be fulfilled the great mystery of that unity which Jesus Christ invoked with fervent prayer from His Heavenly Father on the eve of His sacrifice. She rejoices in peace, knowing well that she is intimately associated with that prayer, and then exults greatly at seeing that invocation extend its efficacy with salutary fruit even among those who are outside her fold.