



THE LORD'S DAY AT HOME

THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

21st May 2020

If you are housebound or self-isolating at this time, please use these prayers to unite yourself with the worship of the Universal Church, and your own Parish, this Holy Day. If alone, read or say these prayers quietly to yourself. If with another, or in a family, someone should read the "leader" parts, and others respond. It might be suitable to find a special, quiet place at home for your Sunday prayers.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

INTRODUCTION

Leader: We have an extra Sunday this week! Today is a Holy Day of Obligation; we celebrate on the fortieth day after Easter what happened to the Lord on this very day – his Ascension back to his Father in heaven. This is not just Jesus' feast – it belongs to all of us: as our prayers today remind us, where Jesus has gone, we hope to follow! Let us praise the glory of God, saying together:

GLORIA

All: **Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

OPENING PRAYER

Leader: Let us pray. Gladden us with holy joys, almighty God, and make us rejoice with devout thanksgiving, for the Ascension of Christ your Son is our exaltation, and, where the Head has gone before in glory, the Body is called to follow in hope. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

Acts 1:1-11

In my earlier work, *Theophilus*, I dealt with everything Jesus had done and taught from the beginning until the day he gave his instructions to the apostles he had chosen through the Holy Spirit, and was taken up to heaven. He had shown himself alive to them after his Passion by many demonstrations: for forty days he had continued to appear

to them and tell them about the kingdom of God. When he had been at table with them, he had told them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for what the Father had promised. 'It is' he had said 'what you have heard me speak about: John baptised with water but you, not many days from now, will be baptised with the Holy Spirit.' Now having met together, they asked him, 'Lord, has the time come? Are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know times or dates that the Father has decided by his own authority, but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and then you will be my witnesses not only in Jerusalem but throughout Judaea and Samaria, and indeed to the ends of the earth.' As he said this he was lifted up while they looked on, and a cloud took him from their sight. They were still staring into the sky when suddenly two men in white were standing near them and they said, 'Why are you men from Galilee standing here looking into the sky? Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven, this same Jesus will come back in the same way as you have seen him go there.'

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

REFLECTION

Leader: There is a huge paradox in the Ascension: as Jesus leaves this earth, it is so that he may become *even more present* to his people. Especially through the presence of the promised Holy Spirit, he will be able to stay with his people of every age and every place – not just these friends who were with him two thousand years ago in Jerusalem. On this day we pray that this Lord Jesus, who opened for all people the way to eternal life in the Kingdom of God, may come to us, may be with us, may carry us home.

A THOUGHT FOR OUR YOUNGER FRIENDS



There's a funny moment in the story of today – did you catch it? After Jesus ascends into heaven, all his friends are standing round looking up into the sky. Two angels ask, "What are you doing?" – they might have felt a bit daft at that point! Truth is, they probably didn't know what was going on. We can feel like that sometimes, staring into the sky or round about, not sure what's happening (especially when we are young and grown ups seem to know everything but won't tell us!) Perhaps today you can ask Jesus to help you trust Him, whatever happens. Oh, and if you want to do something artistic, look

at the picture on page one – this is on the roof of York Minster, and shows Jesus’ feet as he disappears up to heaven: why not put a pair of feet on your ceiling to remember the Ascension?

PROFESSION OF FAITH

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

INTERCESSIONS

Leader: As Jesus returns to his Father, we pray through him for the needs of the Church and the whole world.

Leader: Jesus promised to be with us always; may he comfort anyone who is feeling lonely or isolated. Lord, in your mercy:

All: Hear our prayer!

Leader: Jesus asks his friends to take his Good News throughout the world; let us pray for missionaries who are proclaiming Jesus in different lands. Lord, in your mercy:

All: Hear our prayer!

Leader: Jesus will return in the same way he left: let us pray for perseverance and hope for all in our parish communities as we await his coming. Lord, in your mercy:

All: Hear our prayer!

Please add your own prayers for the needs of the Church, the world and your local community. You may wish to add particular prayers for family members, friends or neighbours in need at this time.

THE LORD’S PRAYER

Leader: At the Saviour’s command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Leader: We offer our prayers in supplication, O Lord, to honour the wondrous Ascension of your Son: grant, we pray, that we too may rise up to the heavenly realms. Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

PREPARATION FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

Leader: The Lord Jesus, the King of glory, conqueror of sin and death, ascended today to the highest heavens, as

the Angels gazed in wonder. Mediator between God and man, judge of the world and Lord of hosts, he ascended, not to distance himself from our lowly state but that we, his members, might be confident of following where he, our Head and Founder, has gone before. At the Last Supper he showed the fullness of your love, as he gave his Body and Blood for his people. Even though we are not in Church, and not able to receive communion today, we open our minds and hearts now to your generous love and the gift of Jesus your Son, welcoming him spiritually into our lives.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

All: My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Holy Sacrament of the altar. I love you above all things and I passionately desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my soul so that I may unite myself wholly to you now and forever. Amen.

Pause for a moment of silent prayer and reflection.

THANKSGIVING PSALM

Leader: God goes up with shouts of joy; the Lord goes up with trumpet blast.

All peoples, clap your hands,
cry to God with shouts of joy!
For the Lord, the Most High, we must fear,
great king over all the earth.

All: God goes up with shouts of joy; the Lord goes up with trumpet blast.

Leader: God goes up with shouts of joy;
the Lord goes up with trumpet blast.
Sing praise for God, sing praise,
sing praise to our king, sing praise.

All: God goes up with shouts of joy; the Lord goes up with trumpet blast.

Leader: God is king of all the earth,
sing praise with all your skill.
God is king over the nations;
God reigns on his holy throne.

All: God goes up with shouts of joy; the Lord goes up with trumpet blast.

FINAL PRAYER AND BLESSING

Leader: Let us pray. Almighty ever-living God, who allow those on earth to celebrate divine mysteries, grant, we pray, that Christian hope may draw us onward to where our nature is united with you. Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Leader: May the Lord ✠ bless us, protect us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

All: Amen.

Leader: Let us bless the Lord!

All: Thanks be to God!