

Parish Newsletter

THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD | 13 MAY 2018
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St Luke's account of the Ascension in the Acts of the Apostles gives some interesting hints about the significance of the event for the Apostles, for the early Church and for us. The focus of the contacts of the risen Jesus with the apostles was "to tell them about the kingdom of God". This had been the focus of his ministry during his life on earth and it continued to be central in the mission he was giving to the apostles who were to continue his work on earth.

The evils Jesus saw in the world of his day have a familiar ring for us today: a great divide between rich and poor; many people unable to live with dignity; the abuse of power; the use of force and violence against the defenceless. Jesus came and proclaimed that there is another way to live, a way that is not governed by force and selfishness, but governed by mutual respect. This way he called the Reign of God. The ruling force in this reign is the law of love. In the forty days before the ascension Jesus prepared his apostles to continue his mission.

Central in this preparation was reminding them that they would not be on their own. The Holy Spirit would be with them to empower them to be effective witnesses. Their success in bringing the gospel

WITNESSES



message from the confines of Palestine to the ends of the known world is testimony to the power of God at work through them.

The social ills that Jesus saw around him are still with us. What has changed is that the rich and the powerful have even more sophisticated and destructive weapons at their disposal to exploit and oppress others. Never has the world been in such need of a wake-up call to another way of living – not the way of greed, selfishness and violence, but the way of mutual respect, compassion for the weak, and generous cooperation to make the world a better place for all. As the apostles were witnesses to the reign of God in their day, we are called to be witnesses in our own time.

It is not that we can change the course of history on our own. Yet the writer of the letter to the Ephesians reminds us "each one of us has been given our own share of grace". Together we can make life more worthwhile and happy for others. This is the gift that the Church has to offer to the world today, and it begins with us.

– John (Peter) Byrne

Reflection

Have you ever been pleasantly surprised by the positive response you got to an initiative in your local community?

Lesson

Each one of us has been given our own share of grace.

Prayer

Lord, may your kingdom come.

THIS WEEK (14–20 MAY)

- 14 **Mon** ST MATHIAS, APOSTLE
- 15 **Tue** St Isidore the Farmer; St Carthage
- 16 **Wed** St Brendan, abbot
- 17 **Thur** St Paschal Baylon, priest
- 18 **Fri** St John I, pope and martyr
- 19 **Sat** St Celestine V, pope
- 20 **Sun** PENTECOST SUNDAY

NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS



Acts 2:1-11
Psalm 103:1, 24, 29-31, 34
Galatians 5:16-25
John 15:26-27, 16:12-15