

Ascension of Jesus: Thursday - May 18, 2023

First Reading: [Acts 1:1-11](#)

Psalm [47:2-3, 6-7, 8-9](#)

Second Reading: [Ephesians 1:17-23](#)

Gospel: [Matthew 28:16-20](#)

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Little appears to be written in the scriptures regarding the day of Christ's ascension, a truly notable event. On several occasions, Jesus refers to the importance of returning to the Father but when the actual day arrived, I wonder if the disciples were really ready?

Here is Jesus saying good-bye to those who walked with Him, listened to His preaching, witnessed His many miracles, were mentored by Him, enjoyed His everyday company, laughed and prayed with him and broke bread with him. It almost seems like they should be in mourning for the departure of this teacher and friend. Perhaps, if there was any grieving it may have been overcome by the need to follow instructions and to get out there and spread the good news. Mark tells us that Jesus said at his ascension to “*go out into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature*” and Luke tells us that after the ascension, “*they returned to Jerusalem with great joy.*” Perhaps they drew strength from the promise of the Holy Spirit that was to come.

There seemed to be no time for the followers to linger over their personal loss. Jesus was transformed and so were his apostles. They immediately went forth “*with great joy.*”

This had to imply a great deal of faith for the task before them was enormous.

We, too, are being asked to transform ourselves and as Tony DeMello often said, “*we are challenged to think the unfamiliar.*”

In Richard Rohr's book on The Universal Christ, he writes:

“Jesus quite clearly believed in change. In fact, the first public word out of his mouth was the Greek imperative verb, metanoete, which literally translates as “change your mind or go beyond your mind.”

So perhaps at this time we can continue to be open to change and reflect on our own growth and transformation over time as well as how the spirit continues to enlighten us both individually, and in our congregation.

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