

Today we celebrate the solemnity of the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus in His 40 days in the desert Jesus learned to experience the Kingdom of God through his temptation and Prayer. He was filled with the Power and gifts of the Holy spirit and received the authority to preach the Good news and power to cast out evil spirits. In His last 40 days with disciples, Jesus taught those experiences about the kingdom of God to His disciples, He sent the Holy Spirit upon the disciples and gave the power to go to the ends of the earth proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ. Forty days after the resurrection Jesus ascends to heaven before the Apostles. Before saying goodbye to the earth, Jesus speaks for the last time to his disciples entrusting them the mission of evangelizing the whole world “ Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit”. This is the missionary mandate that Jesus gave to the Church which we all have to be faithfully doing in word and deed so that all may come to know the gospel and may have life in abundance. Jesus stopped appearing to his disciples and was not with them any more in a physical sense. But it did not mean that the mission of Jesus came to an end. Ascension has not separated Jesus from his church. Though he is ascended, He continues to be with us, the church “And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.” The same mission is now ours, both as individuals and as a community of believers - as Church. Jesus is present in the Church in a different manner; i. e. He is the invisible leader of the visible Church.

Ascension is the glorification of Our Lord Jesus Christ. It is the hope of our glorification and a guarantee to meet our Lord in heaven. It is a reminder of our salvation, a reminder that our true home is in heaven. So we are challenged to look beyond this world to the destiny which we are to share with Christ in heaven. Thus, this world can only be a place of temporary refuge; a world of passage and not permanent. Moreover, this feast of the Ascension is also a reminder for all of us about what we need to do while still on earth alive. Jesus before his Ascension commissioned his disciples, and us too, to be his witnesses and carry out his mission to the ends of the earth till his return. A big task indeed. But before we can proclaim Jesus to others, our first task is to make sure that we make Jesus, the Lord of our own hearts by living according to his teachings and commandments. Thus we can proclaim the Good News to others not only through our words and deeds, but also through our lives, so that Jesus will also reign in their hearts. We are called to live that life and to enable others to live the same life. We are called to become not only spiritually powerful but also to empower others, not only to be liberated but also enable others to be liberated, not only to experience God's presence but also help others to experience the presence of God.

When we live such life we are not left alone but we have the guidance of the Holy Spirit. So let us not merely be a people “standing there looking at the sky for God”. Jesus is not just somewhere on the high that we need to look him up but Christ is present in every creature and in every aspect of human life. He is among us when we live in communion with each other because Jesus said “ Where two or three are gathered in my name I’m there among them”.