

## The Ascension of the Lord, Cycle C May 16, 2010

Readings: Acts 1:1-11; Ephesians 1:17-23; Luke 24:46-53

### Don't Just Stand There

In our first reading we heard the angels tell the apostles: *“Men of Galilee, why are you standing there looking at the sky?”* Jesus ascended bodily into heaven, but left His Church to be His Body here on earth. We are the Body of Christ that Jesus left to continue doing His work after He returned to the Father. And the words of the angels remind us that we are not to be paralyzed or to become lazy or complacent; we are called to be people of action.

Christ our Head is in heaven and, so long as we do not cut ourselves off from the Body by mortal sin, we are therefore connected to heaven. We have, so to speak, one foot already in heaven. And we await with great hope that day when we will see God face-to-face. By doing the will of the Father, by acting as Christ's hands and feet carrying on His work on earth, we grow closer to that reality day by day.

In our humanness we can find this very difficult. And that is why we need to rely on the Holy Spirit to give us strength and guidance; the Holy Spirit promised to the disciples. It is by the power of the Holy Spirit, that we receive especially through the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation, that we are able to be His witnesses to the world around us.

And so today, after six week of celebrating Christ's Resurrection on Easter morning, it is good for us to stop and reflect on how we are using the graces received in the sacraments to do God's work on earth; how well are we, as individual members of the Body of Christ, doing the will of the Father in our lives. Are we active, healthy, vibrant members of the Body of Christ? Or are we a little numb, like we have fallen asleep because we have been sitting too long in one place?

It's a terrible feeling when our leg or arm falls asleep. It's even a worse feeling when we try to wake it back up—that feeling like pins and needles. But in the end it is good to have all our members fully awake. It is good to have all the members of the Body of Christ fully awake, even if it might not be comfortable trying to get to that state.

We need to pray to the Holy Spirit to help us, and St. Paul offers us a prayer of sorts in his letter to the Ephesians. We heard him this morning say: *“May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give you a Spirit of wisdom and revelation resulting in knowledge of him. May the eyes of your hearts be enlightened, that you may know what is the hope that belongs to his call, what are the riches of glory in his inheritance among the holy ones, and what is the surpassing greatness of his power for us who believe.”*

We have been given cause for great hope, but we are called to be people of faith and action. May the words of the angels not be addressed to us as they were to the apostles. Let us not hear: *“Men and women of Imlay City, why are you standing there looking at the sky?”*

Deacon Joe Hulway