

A S C E N S I O N S U N D A Y

St Barnabas and St Wulstans

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, for forty days we have been celebrating with joyful hearts the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, his bursting from the tomb and his defeat of the power of sin and death. He appeared to his disciples many times and told them about the kingdom of God. Today we recall how he left this earth and returned to his Father, ascending into heaven to take his throne over all dominions and powers. Trusting in his reign over all creation, and submitting to his kingly yet loving rule, let us hear the story of his parting.

A reading from Acts

So when they had come together, they asked him, 'Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.' Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. When they had entered the

city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

*For the word of the Lord
Thanks be to God*

Seeing we have a great high priest who has passed through the heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us offer him praise, worthy of his name.

We sing 'At the Name of Jesus'

Coming together as God's family, with confidence let us ask the Lord's forgiveness, for he is full of gentleness and compassion.

A time of silence for reflection

Most merciful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we confess that we have sinned in thought, word and deed. We have not loved you with our whole heart. We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves. In your mercy forgive what we have been, help us to amend what we are, and direct what we shall be; that we may do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.

May the Father of all mercies cleanse you from your sins, and restore you in his image to the praise and glory of his name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Today's Collect and Gospel Reading

Risen, ascended Lord, as we rejoice at your triumph, fill your Church on earth with power and compassion, that all who are estranged by sin may find forgiveness and know your peace, to the glory of God the Father.

Some seasonal words of introduction

We sing 'O Little Town of Bethlehem'

*Hear the Gospel of our
Lord Jesus Christ according to John
Glory to you O Lord*

After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, 'Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do.

'So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed. I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours.

'All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.'

*This is the Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you O Christ*

A reflection is shared

Sharing Our Faith Together

Let us declare our faith in God, saying
We believe in God the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named. We believe in God the Son, who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with his love. We believe in God the Holy Spirit, who strengthens us with power from on high. We believe in one God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

A time of intercession, where we pray for the world, the Church, and for those who have asked us for prayer

The Peace

Jesus says: 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. If you love me, rejoice because I am going to the Father'. Alleluia

The peace of the Lord
be always with you.
And also with you.

We sing 'Hail the Day that Sees Him Rise'

Prayers at the Table

The risen and ascended Lord is here.

His Spirit is with us

Lift up your hearts

We lift them to the Lord

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

It is right to give thanks and praise

You are worthy of our thanks and praise, Lord God of truth, for by the breath of your mouth you have spoken your word, and all things have come into being. You fashioned us in your image and placed us in the garden of your delight. Though we chose the path of rebellion you would not abandon your own. Again and again you drew us into your covenant of grace. You gave your people the law and taught us by your prophets to look for your reign of justice, mercy and peace. As we watch for the signs of your kingdom on earth, we echo the song of the angels in heaven, evermore praising you and *singing*:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Lord God, you are the most holy one, enthroned in splendour and light, yet in the coming of your Son Jesus Christ you reveal the power of your love made perfect in our human weakness. Embracing our humanity, Jesus showed us the way of salvation; loving us to the end, he gave himself to death for us; dying for his own, he set us free from the bonds of sin, that we might rise and reign with him in glory.

On the night he gave up himself for us all he took bread and gave you thanks; he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper he took the cup and gave you thanks; he gave it to them, saying: Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

Therefore we proclaim the death that he suffered on the cross, we celebrate his resurrection, his bursting from the tomb, we rejoice that he reigns at your right hand on high and we long for his coming in glory. As we recall the one, perfect sacrifice of our redemption, Father, by your Holy Spirit let these gifts of your creation be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ; form us into the likeness of Christ and make us a perfect offering in your sight. Look with favour on your people and in your mercy hear the cry of our hearts:

Bless the earth, heal the sick, let the oppressed go free, and fill your Church with power from on high.

Gather your people from the ends of the earth to feast with all your saints at the table in your kingdom, where the new creation is brought to perfection in Jesus Christ our Lord; by whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory be yours, almighty Father, for ever and ever.

Amen!

The Lord's Prayer is said

The communion bread is broken

Lord, we died with you on the cross

Now we are raised to new life

We were buried in your tomb

Now we share in your resurrection

Live in us, that we may live in you

Come to this table, not because you must but because you may, not because you are strong but because you are weak.

Come not because any goodness of your own gives you the right to come, but because you need mercy and help. Come because you love the Lord a little and would like to love him more. Come, because he loved you and gave himself for you. Come and meet the risen and ascended Christ present in broken bread and wine outpoured.

*As we share communion,
the hymn 'Jesus is Lord' is sung*

Prayers after Communion

Let us pray

God our Father, you have raised our humanity in Christ and have fed us with the bread of heaven: mercifully grant that, nourished with such spiritual blessings, we may set our hearts in the heavenly places; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

We thank you, Lord, that you have fed us in this sacrament, united us with Christ, and given us a foretaste of the heavenly banquet prepared for all peoples. Amen.

A reading from Acts 1

Then the disciples returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying. They were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

Silence is kept

As we wait in silence

make us ready for your coming Spirit

As we listen to your word

make us ready for your coming Spirit

As we worship you in majesty

make us ready for your coming Spirit

As we long for your refreshing

make us ready for your coming Spirit

As we long for your renewing

make us ready for your coming Spirit

As we long for your equipping

make us ready for your coming Spirit

As we long for your empowering

make us ready for your coming Spirit

May the Spirit, who set the Church on fire upon the day of Pentecost, bring the world alive with the love of the risen Christ. And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Waiting expectantly for the promised Holy Spirit, go in the peace of Christ.

Alleluia, alleluia

Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia

We sing 'Crown Him with Many Crowns'