

Where is Jesus going and where? (Ascension Thursday)

A Holy Day of Obligation

In urban areas especially, Thursdays are becoming very busy commercially with the increasing volume of late night shopping. For many householders, Thursday is the most opportune time to stock up for the week-end and indeed for the full week ahead. In such an atmosphere it is particularly difficult on a Thursday to focus our hearts and minds on any religious feast no matter how significant. So despite its centrality to our faith, Ascension Day is being ignored. While the loss is great we can lessen its impact by reflecting how St Luke wrote about the event itself. Luke wrote both a Gospel on the life of Jesus and a news report on the activities of the infant Church. Ascension features as the finale to the Gospel and as the opening of the Acts of the Apostles. Both accounts are complimentary in highlighting that an important state of the Mission of Jesus was now complete and as He was returning to the Father, He was entrusting to the Disciples, the young Church, the ongoing task of preaching forgiveness in His name. To inspire them for this daunting task He promised them the ongoing presence of the Holy Spirit.

With that same promise, the same task is entrusted to us. It is to believe that Jesus died and rose from the dead so that all people could be reconciled with God and with each other. In the security of faith we must bring such reconciliation to others by words and example so that, being gathered by Baptism all may worship Him with Hope and Joy. So the final word it seems to me is this – that through the Gospel and our example we are meant to be a reconciling people wherever we are.

Good Luck and with every Blessing

Fr. Martin