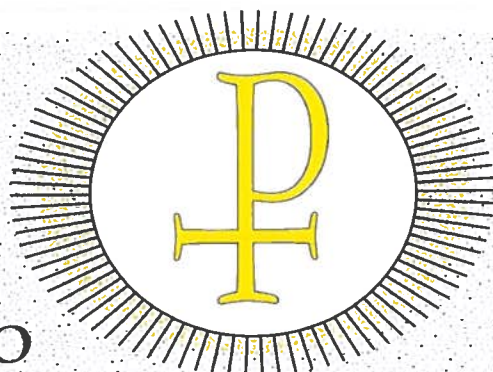



The Roman Catholic Parishes of  
Sacred Heart, Goodrich  
St. Margaret Mary, Herscher  
St. James the Apostle, Irwin

SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

MAY 16-17, 2026



Go  
and make  
disciples of all nations  
baptizing them  
in the name of the  
and of the **FATHER**  
**SON** and of the  
**HOLY SPIRIT**  
teaching them to observe all  
that I have commanded you.   
For I am with you  
until the end of the world

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Weekend Masses:

St. Margaret Mary Sat. 5:00 pm Sun. 10:30 am  
Sacred Heart Sun. 7:30 am  
St. James Sun. 9:00 am

Confessions:

St. Margaret Mary Sat. 4:15 pm—4:45pm

Church Mailing Address: 207 E. 5th Street Herscher, IL 60941 Phone: 815-426-2550

Quotable- "The Ascension is not only about Our Lord's Divinity ascending into Heaven, but also about our humanity being admitted to seat itself at the Right Hand of the Father in Heaven."

—Pope Saint Leo the Great

Pentecost Sunday			May 23-24, 2026	
Liturgical Schedule	St. Margaret Mary Saturday, May 23 5:00 pm	Sacred Heart Sunday, May 24 7:30 am	St. James Sunday, May 24 9:00 am	St. Margaret Mary Sunday, May 24 10:30 am
Celebrant	Fr. Ron	Fr. Ron	Fr. Ron Deacon Ron	Fr. Ron
Ushers	Todd Datweiler Brett Buza Gery Wright Bob Schultz	Daryl Ferris Dennis Pankey	Jerry Ogrentz Mary Offerman Bob Buente Arlen Hansen	Wayne Bisailon Larry Wolles Sean Riordan Darren Lovell
Lector	Dave Emling	Rhonda Berns	Mary Peerbolte	Mary Hope Pleckham
Eucharistic Minister			Donna Bernicky	Susan Feller
Servers				Sydney Weldon
Greeters			Greeter—Dallas Ferris R. Leader—The Peerboltes	Wayne Bisailon

### Mass Intentions for the Week

#### Monday, May 18 (SMM)

8:00 am +Mary Heimburger (Mary Ann Wagner)

#### Tuesday, May 19 (SH)

8:00 am No Mass

#### Wednesday, May 20 (SJ)

8:00 am No Mass

#### Friday, May 22 (SMM)

8:00am No Mass

#### Saturday, May 23 (SMM)

5:00 pm For All the Parish Family

#### Sunday, May 24

7:30 am (SH) For Past and Present Priests of Sacred Heart  
(The Parishioners)

9:00 am (SJ) +Louise Devine (Tom/Gene/Kathy O'Connor)  
+Harold Devine (The Family)

10:30 am (SMM) +Mary Kelch (Wayne/Julie Bisailon)  
+Bob Deany (Bill/Betty Kelch)

### Looking Ahead

Monday, May 18—Knights of Columbus meeting 6:30 SJ

Monday, May 25 — Memorial Day Mass SMM 9 am

Pastor— Fr. Ron Neitzke- 815-426-2550

Deacon – Ron Gagnon— rjgckg@aol.com

Home—815-933-4077

Parish Email – smm\_sja\_sh@yahoo.com

TriParish web page – [www.triparishcatholics.org](http://www.triparishcatholics.org)

Like us on Facebook triparishcatholic communities

Tri Parish Church office –Barb Riker 426-2550

Julie Bisailon 426-2550

Bulletin – Debbie Jensen - 426-2550 debjen04@gmail.com

Religious Education –

St. MM – Jill Fulton [jfulton.stmm@gmail.com](mailto:jfulton.stmm@gmail.com)

Sacred Heart – Rhonda Berns – 426-5015

St. James—Tanhya Osenga [tosenga81@gmail.com](mailto:tosenga81@gmail.com)

Parish Nurse – Jackie Eberle – 815-421-4048

Prayer Line—

SMM -Janice 815-426-2574 [jdstreefarms1@gmail.com](mailto:jdstreefarms1@gmail.com)

### Question of the week—

• What will I do this week to give witness to Christ in me and my neighbor?

## Collections Weekend of May 9-10, 2026

St. Margaret Mary—\$2,483

St. James—\$1,208

Sacred Heart— \$1,841

Thank you for your generosity!

### A Stewardship Moment

#### Solemnity of the Lord's Ascension

#### Weekend of May 16/17, 2026

In today's Gospel Jesus charges his followers to "make disciples of all nations." What exactly is going on here? What is this Great Commission anyway? Good stewards know they are directed to share what they exercise stewardship over: their life of faith in Christ Jesus. They know Jesus didn't direct them to go to church and to keep quiet about it; or to go out into the neighborhood, workplace or marketplace and just be nice. Christ's Good News is meant to be shared. Many people in our communities don't know about Jesus Christ. Does that bother us? Do we care? Do we realize we are supposed to do something about it?

#### Reflection— The Greater Strength

A little boy entered a shop, in the window of which was a card, "Boy Wanted." Thinking he was too weak for the work, the gentleman said, "Well, my lad, what can you do?" The boy replied, "I can do what I'm told, sir." This so pleased the shopkeeper that he said, "You'll do, my boy

## May is Mental Health Awareness Month

May is Mental Health Awareness month, and what better way for us to reveal God's compassion during this Year of Mercy than to become more aware of and embrace the people we encounter who suffer from mental illness. People with mental illness sometimes behave in ways we can't comprehend. Those with severe depression sometimes stay in bed all day, unable to manage the most basic motivation to move. People with anxiety disorders can be gripped by irrational or even unidentifiable fears that don't incapacitate others. Those affected by psychotic disorders may see things that aren't real, hear voices that don't exist, and sometimes lose the ability to discern reality at all. Sometimes people with mental illness mistreat or hurt the people they love—or themselves. Some who need medication stop taking it or won't start. Some who seem to be doing well suddenly start showing symptoms again. Whatever the mental health crisis, members of our family of faith are called to be good stewards and embrace these vulnerable brothers and sisters, as Jesus did.

When people see symptoms of mental illness in others there is a tendency to distance themselves, ignore them and hope someone else will help, even in our parish communities. One weary mom lamented: "When a family member suffers from cancer or other diseases, people send cards, visit and bring a casserole. If your family member suffers from a mental illness, there is little contact or support." This mother's feeling of abandonment is regrettable and suggests that our family of faith has no tolerance or empathy for this kind of suffering. But the parish community is the Body of Christ. It cannot leave the impression that Christ himself is ready to walk away from those who carry these burdens.

As stewards of Christ's love and mercy, we are called to follow his example, to reach out to those who suffer, even those who suffer mentally and emotionally; to embrace them rather than shrink away. No one is beyond hope, past the point where God's grace touches them. We are not called to have all the answers or understand all the mysteries of mental illness. But we are called to love. That is the disciple's response.

### Parish News:

#### All Parishes—

⇒ Tri-Parish Office Hours— Our office hours are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday 9am—12 pm.

#### St. Margaret Mary-

#### St. James

⇒ The Rosary Committee is looking for a volunteer to chair the committee. Directions for purchasing supplies and making the rosaries is available. The funds are provided by the St. James CCW. If you're interested in either leading the committee or in helping make the rosaries please contact Bea Papineau

#### Sacred Heart—

⇒ The week of May 17th, the Blessed Virgin Mary candle burns in prayer for Oliver Schultz, and the St. Joseph candle burns in prayer for Jordan and Allison McLean

⇒ We are hosting a Free parish breakfast on Sunday May 24 following the 7:30am Mass. Everyone is welcome. We hope to see you there! Menu on page 6.

### The Sunday Gospel in Everyday English

Meanwhile, the 11 disciples were on their way to Galilee, headed for the mountain Jesus had set for their reunion. The moment they saw him they worshipped him. Some, though, held back, not sure about worship, about risking themselves totally.

Jesus, undeterred, went right ahead and gave his charge: "God authorized and commanded me to commission you: Go and train everyone you meet, far and near, in this way of life, marking them by Baptism in the threefold name: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Then instruct them in the practice of all I have commanded you. I'll be with you as you do this, day after day after day, right up to the end of the age" (from Matthew 28).

**Obscure saint of the week: St. Giulia Salzano (May 17)** was the daughter of Adelaide Valentino and Diego Salzano. Her father was a captain in the Lancers of King Ferdinand II of Naples and died when Giulia was four years old. She was raised and educated by the *Sisters of Charity* in the Royal Orphanage of Saint Nicola La Strada until age fifteen. She was a schoolteacher and catechist in Casoria, Naples. Giulia was a friend and co-worker with Blessed Caterina Volpicelli. Noted for her personal devotion to the Virgin Mary, she encouraged others in devotion to Our Lady and the Sacred Heart of Jesus. She was the foundress of the *Congregation of the Catechetical Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus* in 1905.



**Other obscure saint of the week: St. Pascal Baylon (May 19)** was the son of the pious peasants Martin Baylon and Elizabeth Jubera. From his youth he displayed great devotion to the Eucharist. Pascal worked as a shepherd from ages 7 to 24, and was a good influence on his shepherd friends, an often-rowdy group. A Franciscan lay brother with friars of the *Alcantarine Reform*, he often served as cook or doorkeeper. His charity to the poor and afflicted and his unfailing courtesy and humility were remarkable even by Franciscan standards. While traveling in France, he defended the Real Presence against the blasphemies of a Calvinist preacher and narrowly escaped death at the hands of a Huguenot mob. Poorly educated, he was still a counselor sought by rich and poor alike. His cultus is especially strong in Spain and southern Italy, in Central and South America.

#### Questions Catholics Ask

##### What is Christ's Ascension?

For most of my life I thought the Ascension was a feast basically designed to resolve a mystery: After Easter, where did Jesus go? Answer: back to his Father. Most scripture scholars are quick to point out that the stories of the Ascension do not match up in many details, which suggests they aren't intended to give us a visual on what historically occurred the day Jesus left town.

Luke says Jesus was carried off to heaven from Bethany on the same day as the Resurrection. The account in the Acts of the Apostles reports this event 40 days later and from the Mount of Olives. Mark says it happened later in the day on Easter—but apparently from indoors, while Jesus was seated at the table with his disciples. Houston, we have a problem.

Or maybe not. Early church father Saint John Chrysostom insisted the event was intended to convey the final exaltation of Christ: After the humiliation of the Cross he winds up at the right hand of his Father. Saint Augustine said the Ascension is really about the glorification of us all: Where Jesus went, we, too, might go.

It's possible to talk about ascension in pre-Christian terms. Prefigurings of this event in the Old Testament include the mysterious departure of Enoch in Genesis who "walked with God, and he was no longer here, for God took him." This startling sentence is amplified in later extra-biblical books about Enoch. How can you let a story line like that go? The prophet Elijah likewise enjoyed a grand exit on a fiery chariot in 2 Kings: "Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind, and Elisha saw it happen."

It should be added that the Catholic Church teaches that Mary, mother of Jesus, was also assumed into heaven, though the Bible doesn't include the story. Theologians like to distinguish between "passive" assumptions like these and the active principle of an ascension, in which one chooses to depart, as Jesus did.

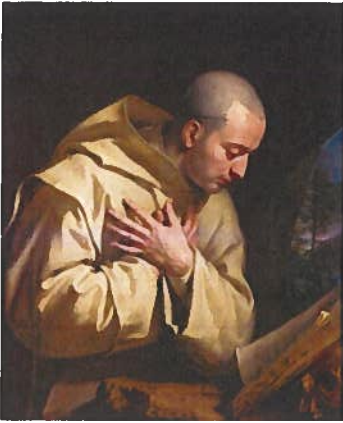
Another element that makes the Ascension unique is that while Jesus is technically "gone" he's not absent but rather present in a new way. His bodily Ascension makes it possible for the church now to become the viable Body of Christ on earth. Jesus is present not only in the church but also in his Spirit and in the Eucharist. If the clouds and angels in the Ascension stories have been called apocalyptic stage props, the idea that Jesus is lifting up the church to where he is, is not.

#### Scripture

• Genesis 5:21-24; 2 Kings 2:1-18; 1 Maccabees 2:58; Sirach 49:14; Mark 16:14-20; Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:1-12; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; Hebrews 11:5

Where did St. Matthew go after the Ascension?

Legend says he made it to Ethiopia, where he had a showdown with a king.



You may think you know the story of St. Matthew—the tax collector who changed his ways and became one of Christ’s Apostles. But do you know what he did after Christ returned to heaven?

After Christ’s Ascension, St. Matthew’s missionary journeys took him to the far reaches of the known world—as far away as Ethiopia. Legend says that there, Matthew found himself in the middle of a high-stakes confrontation with a powerful king.

Matthew arrived in Ethiopia and immediately began preaching the Gospel, winning over many of the locals. The glorious news of the Gospel and St. Matthew’s priestly ministry moved the Ethiopian people and St. Matthew quickly became an influential figure.

One of the Ethiopians who converted was a noblewoman named Ephigenia.

Ephigenia, under Matthew’s spiritual guidance, dedicated her life to Christ and took a vow of virginity,

refusing to marry.

While the Christian community flourished, not everyone was pleased...King Hirtacus, the ruler of the region, had his eye on Ephigenia and wanted her as his wife. Her refusal, backed by Matthew’s unwavering support, enraged the king.

Determined to have his way, Hirtacus approached Matthew directly, demanding that the Apostle bless the marriage and give Ephigenia to him. The king even offered Matthew half his kingdom if he would bless the marriage!

But Matthew didn’t waver. He calmly told Hirtacus that Ephigenia was already promised to Christ and no earthly power could break that vow.

Enraged by Matthew’s defiance, Hirtacus publicly confronted him, making it clear that if Matthew did not approve the marriage, he would pay with his life. The court was tense, with everyone watching to see how the Apostle would respond. But Matthew stood firm, speaking boldly: “It is better for you to fear the eternal fires of hell than the wrath of man.”

Hirtacus, humiliated and furious, gave the order. As Matthew knelt in prayer at the altar, the king’s soldiers approached, spears in hand. In a brutal moment, they ran him through, killing him on the spot. Matthew died a martyr, his blood spilling at the altar before which he had been praying.

But the story doesn’t end there. Word of Matthew’s death spread quickly, and instead of breaking the Christian community, it strengthened it. Ephigenia remained resolute in her vow, inspiring others to remain firm in their faith despite the king’s threats.

Hirtacus, having failed to bend the will of Ephigenia or destroy the Church, soon faced the collapse of his rule and was eventually deposed. His power faded away while Christianity continued to spread.

St. Matthew’s legacy is far-reaching. Not only did he travel across continents to spread Christianity, he was also one of the four Gospel writers who brought the life of Christ to the whole world.

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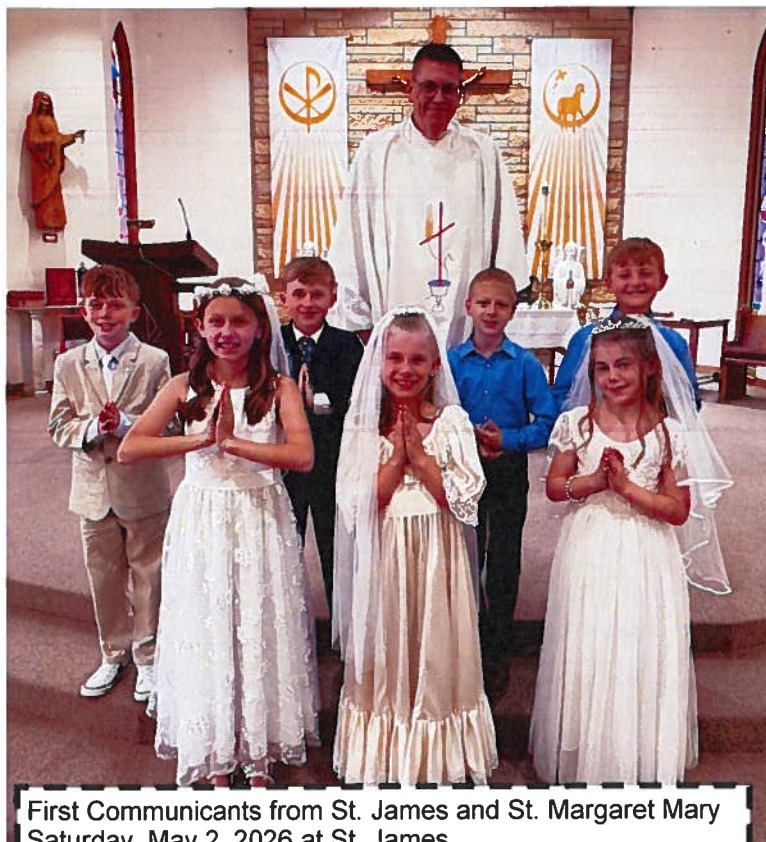
**Reflection-**

In every new situation we must start all over again like children, cultivate a passionate interest in things and events, and begin by taking delight in externals, until we have the good fortune to grasp the substance.



“This Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven will return in the same way...”  
**ACTS 1:11**

# MAY BLESSINGS



First Communicants from St. James and St. Margaret Mary Saturday, May 2, 2026 at St. James

Front row: Amelia Allen, Teagan Down, Holliday Hodgkin

Back row: Ronan Turner, Reid Carlson, Rhys Guimond, Michael Harwood



Sacred Heart's May Crowning

## SACRED HEART PARISH BREAKFAST

SUNDAY, MAY 24 AFTER MASS

MENU: EGGS, BACON, HAM, FRUIT, CASSEROLES, DONUTS, BISCUITS AND GRAVY, COFFEE, JUICE, & MILK.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!  
HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!



## Glazin' the Trail to Support Catholic Charities in Kankakee County

Support Catholic Charities in Kankakee County and enjoy a morning of fun, nature, and donuts at the 4th annual Glazin' the Trail 5K/2K!

 Saturday, May 30, 2026

 9:00 AM Start

 Kankakee Community College, 100 College Drive, Kankakee

This family-friendly event is open to all ages and fitness levels! Walk or run with friends, family, and even your dog! This event is all about fun and supporting Catholic Charities' vital programs and services in Kankakee County.

**Come out, eat donuts, and make a difference!**

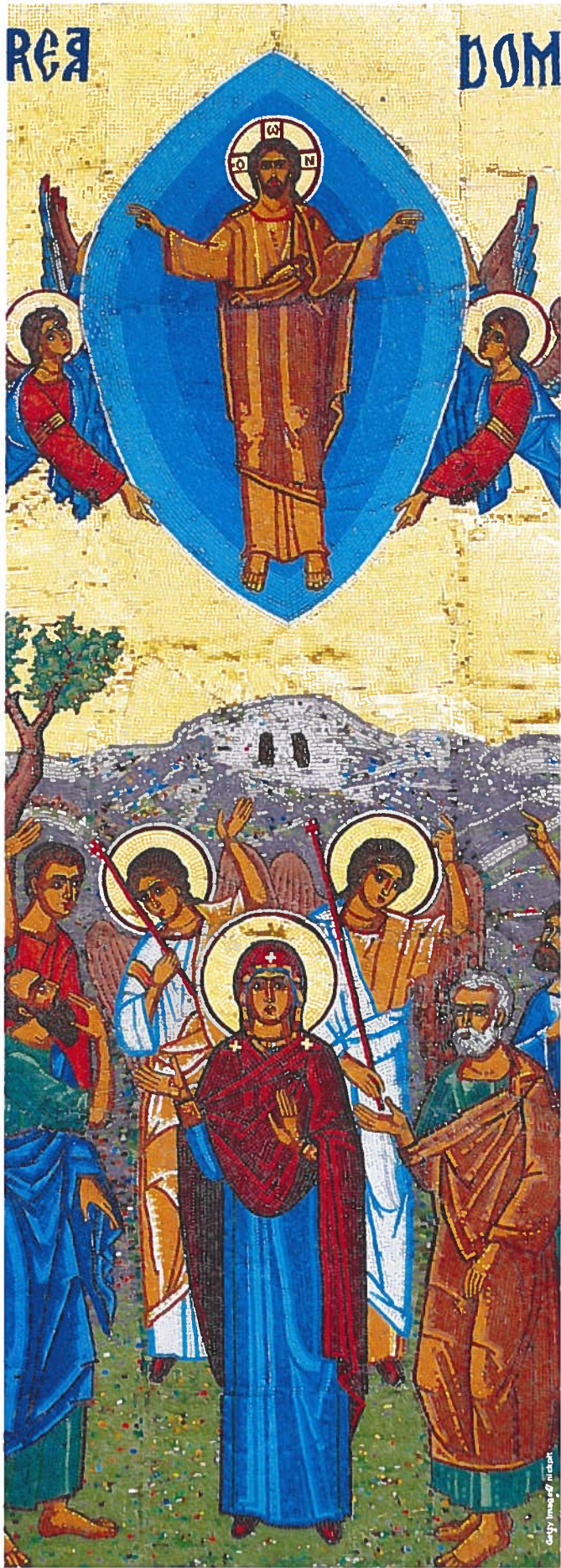
To register, visit <https://raceroster.com/events/2026/118051/glazin-the-trail>

Want to learn more? Call 815-724-1160 or email [dschultz@cc-doj.org](mailto:dschultz@cc-doj.org).

The check said \$3,000 but....

In reality, the youth of our Tri-Parish Community actually collected \$4, 497.43 to send to the Ronald McDonald House in their "Kids Helping Kids" initiative!

What a fantastic endeavor! Thank you to all the students and to all who supported their efforts!



May 17, 2026

Written by  
THE  
FAITHFUL  
DISCIPLE

## The Ascension of the Lord

Acts 1:1-11 | Eph 1:17-23 | Mt 28:16-20

### **GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE**

This year, I cannot help but notice how kingdom-centric the readings for the Solemnity of the Ascension are. In our first reading, Jesus appears to his disciples for forty days after his resurrection and speaks to them about the kingdom of God. Our psalm beckons us to rejoice that God is mounting his throne - another kingdom image! Our second reading tells us that God has given Christ authority over "every principality, power, and dominion" - a clear sign that he is the one reigning over all. These references seem to be telling us that today's feast is Jesus' "coronation day" - the day he takes his rightful place at the right hand of the Father. From the moment Jesus ascends to heaven, he is reigning. What a consoling thought for us, who may at times find ourselves discouraged by our lives or the state of affairs around us. We have hope because we know that despite appearances to the contrary, Jesus reigns, and it is only a matter of time until the Father puts all things beneath Christ's feet.

### **GO EVANGELIZE**

#### **PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT**

In today's Gospel, Jesus tells his disciples - and us - to "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations." It's a tall order - bringing every nation under the reign of Christ. But we needn't be intimidated. The Ascension offers us hope, for - as the *Catechism* reminds us - "Jesus Christ, having entered the sanctuary of heaven once and for all, intercedes constantly for us as the mediator who assures us of the permanent outpouring of the Holy Spirit." (667) Jesus ascended into heaven and now is constantly interceding for us before the Father, constantly pouring out his Spirit on us! In all our efforts to evangelize, we have that constant support and grace being sent our way to equip us for this work.

### **REFLECT**

Oftentimes, we think of the Ascension as Jesus leaving us after the end of his earthly ministry. But Jesus promises that he does not leave us, but rather, that he is always with us, "until the end of the age." Spend some time this week reflecting on the ways that, having taken his seat at the right hand of the Father, Jesus is now ever-more present, pouring out his grace and his Spirit upon us at every moment.

# THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

## SPIRITUALITY

### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Matt 28:19a, 20b

℟. Alleluia, alleluia.

Go and teach all nations, says the Lord;

I am with you always, until the end of the world.

℟. Alleluia, alleluia.



### Gospel

Matt 28:16-20; L58A

The eleven disciples went to Galilee,  
to the mountain to which Jesus had  
ordered them.

When they saw him, they worshiped,  
but they doubted.

Then Jesus approached and said to  
them,

“All power in heaven and on earth  
has been given to me.

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,

teaching them to observe all that I  
have commanded you.

And behold, I am with you always, until  
the end of the age.”

### Reflecting on the Gospel

In her book *Wouldn't Take Nothing for My Journey Now*, poet laureate Maya Angelou shares memories of her grandmother, who raised her in the little town of Stamps, Arkansas. Her difficult life caused her to rely utterly on the power of God. Angelou writes that Mamma would clasp her hands behind her back, look up into a distant sky, and declare, “I will step out on the word of God.” Angelou continues, “She would look up as if she could will herself into the heavens, and tell her family in particular and the world in general, ‘I will step out on the word of God.’ . . . Immediately, I could see her flung into space, moons at her feet and stars at her head, comets swirling around her. Naturally it wasn't difficult for me to have faith. I grew up knowing that the word of God has power.”

In today's readings, we have similar images of Jesus “taken up” into the sky, having spent an earthly lifetime stepping out on the word of God. The disciples want to know if now is the time that he is going to restore the kingdom to Israel (Acts 1:6). They have hopes and expectations for the future fixed in past experiences of God's saving hand in their history. Jesus does not directly answer their question but points them to the power of the Holy Spirit, with which they will be clothed. This power will guide them so that they will be able to step out on the word that has been entrusted to them, courageously witnessing to the gospel from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth.

What Jesus instructs the disciples to proclaim is that God holds out to all people the priceless raiment of divine forgiveness and asks in return only that they let themselves be clothed with power from on high to turn away from anything that stands between them and the divine clothier. Disciples are not to stand looking up into the sky, gazing after the One who has now been taken up. Their work is to teach others that same trust in the power of the word to uphold them and clothe them with power.

Although the Gospel of Luke depicts the ascension as a separate event that occurs forty days after the resurrection, in the first centuries the church did not treat it either in its writings or in its liturgies as a separate happening from the resurrection. Rather, the passion, death, resurrection, ascension, glorification, and giving of the Spirit are all various facets of one moment. Luke, in fact, as we see in today's readings, tells the story of the ascension twice: once at the end of the gospel, as occurring on the day of resurrection, and again at the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles, as happening forty days later. It is one grand act of God, one word on which we step out, one power that clothes us, until the day we too are taken into the divine realm forever.