

Ascension of the Lord, Year C, Junior High

Submitted by lectionaryadmin on Thu, 04/11/2013 - 20:00

Acts 1:1-11

Luke 24:46-53

Opening Prayer

Let us Pray.

God of Power,

Through your Spirit, you help us love Jesus and the people we meet.

Thank you for sending the Spirit to strengthen us.

Help us follow Jesus always and let our kindness show Jesus' love to others.

Fill us with the same joy as those first disciples as we, too, work to begin your kingdom here on earth.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Opening Life Reflection

Create an "eyewitness news broadcast" of those who were at the ascension. Allow some participants to be newscasters and others to be newscasters. Imagine the answers to such questions as:

- What did Jesus say to you? Was he concerned about anything? What did he think would happen when he was gone? Where did he go!
- Did you understand everything Jesus asked you to do? How do you feel about his leaving? Do you think you can do what he asked?
- Where will you go from here? Who will help you with your job?

Following the "newscast" discuss ways that we are similar to those first Apostles.

Listening to the Word of God

In the Book of Acts Luke describes what happens just after Jesus ascends to heaven.

Read Acts 1:1-11

Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- What misunderstandings do the disciples still have about the kingdom that Jesus is going to? How did Jesus respond to their misunderstanding?
- What did Jesus tell the disciples to do while they waited for the Holy Spirit?

- What did the angels tell the disciples about Jesus return?

Jesus explains to the Apostles that it is time for him to go back to the Father. He gives them some special instructions before he goes.

Read Luke 24:46-53

Allow for silence.

- What does Jesus tell the disciples to do after he leaves?
- What help would be coming for the disciples?
- Why are the disciples filled with joy?

Scripture Background

Provide 2-3 minutes of background on the reading using the Catechist Background section.

The Book of Acts is written by Luke and he begins it at the point where he concludes his Gospel. Jesus leads the Apostles to Bethany and gives them instructions for continuing his mission. The first thing he tells them is to return to Jerusalem and wait for the Holy Spirit to come to them. The Spirit will help them with their work and will always be with them. The disciples are still not quite sure what the kingdom is that Jesus is going to. They continue to think in worldly terms. The disciples see Jesus float toward heaven in a cloud and then two angels appear to them. The angels tell them that Jesus will be back and he will return in the same way he just left.

Jesus reminds the disciples of early prophecies that claim the savior's death and resurrection. It is now time for Jesus to return to God, but before he goes, he tells the Apostles that they must carry out the work Jesus began. Beginning in Jerusalem, they must go into the world and tell others the Good News of Jesus. They are not expected to do this on their own. Jesus tells them that they will receive strength and power from the Holy Spirit. The Apostles are very happy to hear this news and also happy to do what Jesus asks.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

- Jesus left the Apostles with a special job to do. What special job do you think Jesus is asking you to do?
- How do you use the gifts of the Holy Spirit? Are there some gifts you need to develop?
- What are you doing while you are waiting for Jesus to return?

If you are not going to continue with the doctrinal discussion, proceed to the Gospel in Life.

Doctrinal Discussion Starters

Jesus Ascended into Heaven

Jesus' earthly work is finished and in order to fulfill the scriptures and God's plan for salvation, he has to return to God. We know this and declare it when we recite the Nicene Creed, our profession of faith. We say, "He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father." We also believe that Jesus is still with us, providing strength for our lives. In the same way he promised to



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be with the disciples, he is with us as well. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit so that the disciples would not be alone in their mission to carry Jesus' message into the world. We also receive the Holy Spirit and always have Jesus with us as we follow him.

- When have you known that you were not alone, that the Spirit was with you?
- What kind of hope does Jesus give you?
- How does Jesus accomplish his mission through you?

Sacrament Connection

In baptism we receive the Holy Spirit and in confirmation we are sealed with the gifts of the Spirit. Through these sacraments, the Spirit strengthens us to continue the mission Jesus began on earth. Sometimes it is not easy to follow Jesus but these sacraments give us the gifts we need to be disciples. We receive courage, wisdom and good judgment for making decisions. When people witness how we live using these gifts, they also witness the work of Jesus through us.

The Gospel in Life

Jesus encouraged his friends and gave them a blessing. Find someone this week who needs special help and encouragement. Let them see Jesus' love through something you do to help them.

Connecting to Faith First® Legacy Edition

At Home Family Guide, theme 3

Junior High, Mystery of God, chapter 10

Junior high, Church History, chapter 1

Blest Are We

Grade 7, chapter 2

Grade 8, chapters 6, 12

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