

THE ASCENSION OF THE Lord, Year C

Season of Easter

First Reading # Acts 1:1-11

Why are you standing here looking into the sky? Jesus has been taken into heaven.

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

In my earlier work, Theophilus, I wrote about everything Jesus began to do and teach from the beginning until the day when, after giving instructions to the apostles he had chosen through the Holy Spirit, he was taken up to heaven.

He had presented himself alive to them after his Passion by many proofs: for forty days he had continued to appear to them speaking about the kingdom of God. While at table with them, he had told them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for what the Father had promised. He had said,

‘This is what you have heard me speak about: for John baptised with water, but you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.

Now having met together, they asked him,

‘Lord, is this the time for you to restore the kingdom to Israel?’

He replied,

‘It is not for you to know times or dates that the Father has laid down by his own authority, but you will receive the power of the Holy Spirit coming upon you, and you will be my witnesses both in Jerusalem and throughout Judaea and Samaria, and indeed to the ends of the earth.’

As he said this he was lifted up while they looked on, and a cloud took him up out of their sight. And while they were staring into the sky as he went, suddenly two men in white were standing beside them, and they said,

‘Why are you Galileans standing here looking into the sky?
This Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven
will come back in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.’

The word of the Lord.

***God mounts his throne to shouts of joy:
a blare of trumpets for the Lord.***

All peoples, clap your hands.
Cry to God with shouts of joy!
For the Lord, the Most High, is fearsome
the great king over all the earth.

***God mounts his throne to shouts of joy:
a blare of trumpets for the Lord.***

God goes up with shouts of joy.
The Lord goes up to the sound of a trumpet.
Sing praise for God; sing praise!
Sing praise to our king; sing praise!

***God mounts his throne to shouts of joy:
a blare of trumpets for the Lord.***

God is king of all the earth.
Sing praise with all your skill.
God reigns over the nations.
God sits on his holy throne.

***God mounts his throne to shouts of joy:
a blare of trumpets for the Lord.***

Second Reading # Hebrews 9:24-28.10:19-23

Christ has entered heaven.

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

For Christ did not enter a sanctuary made with hands which was merely a model of the real one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. Nor was it to offer himself again and again, as the high priest goes into the sanctuary year after year with the blood that is not his own, or else he would have had to suffer over and over again since the foundation of the world.

As it is, he has made his appearance once and for all, at the end of the last age, to do away with sin by sacrificing himself. Since it is appointed for human beings to die only once, after which comes judgement, so Christ too, having offered himself only once *to bear the sins of many*, will manifest himself a second time, sin being no more, to those who are waiting for him, to bring them salvation.

We have then, brothers and sisters, complete confidence in entering the sanctuary through the blood of Jesus, by a new way which he has opened for us, a living opening through the curtain, that is to say, his flesh. And we have a great *priest* over the house of God.

So let us approach sincere in heart and filled with faith, our hearts sprinkled clean from bad conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold firm the unwavering profession of hope, for he who made the promise is trustworthy.

The word of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation # Matthew 28:19.20

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
Go and teach all people my gospel.
I am with you always, until the end of the world.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Gospel # Luke 24:46-53

While blessing them, he was taken to heaven.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

Jesus said to his disciples:

‘It is written that in this way the Messiah should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that, in his name, repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be preached to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

‘You are witnesses to this. And see, I am sending upon you what the Father has promised. Stay in the city, then, until you have been clothed with power from on high.’

Then he took them out as far as Bethany, and raising his hands he blessed them. And it happened that as he blessed them, he withdrew from them and was carried up to heaven. They worshipped him and then went back to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the Temple praising God.

The Gospel of the Lord.