

May 21, 2023



Center for Spiritual Development

Daily Reflections

JOURNEYING THROUGH EASTER

Photo by Tomas Williams from Pexels

SOLEMNITY OF THE ASCENSION (OBSERVED)

By Sister Kit Gray, CSJ

Introduction

The Easter season is almost over. Today we reflect on Christ's ascension into heaven, his return to the Father, and we look toward Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit. However, the whole Easter season has been a kind of "time warp." We have been reading from the Gospel of John, primarily from the "Last Supper Discourses," the words of Jesus before his passion, death, and resurrection and, at the same time, we have been reading from the Acts of the Apostles about the spread of the Good News by Jesus' followers after they had received the Holy Spirit. In both cases, we are reading or hearing these Scripture passages knowing "the rest of the story." That has shaped my own reflections throughout this Easter season.

Reflection

Read the passage below, putting yourself in the scene with the apostles, trying to understand what is happening and what Jesus is saying before they received the Holy Spirit.

Read the passage again, with the heart of the apostles after receiving the Holy Spirit.

Read the passage again, asking yourself what it means for you today. How have you experienced the power of the Holy Spirit in our world? In your life? How have you been a witness to the person and message of Jesus?



Bright white clouds against a blue sky
Photo by Fillipe Gomes / Pexels

Today's First Reading

In the first book, Theophilus, I dealt with all that Jesus did and taught until the day he was taken up, after giving instructions through the holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen.

He presented himself alive to them by many proofs after he had suffered,

appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

While meeting with them, he enjoined them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for “the promise of the Father about which you have heard me speak; for John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

When they had gathered together they asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”

He answered them, “It is not for you to know the times or seasons that the Father has established by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

When he had said this, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him from their sight. While they were looking intently at the sky as he was going, suddenly two men dressed in white garments stood beside them. They said, “Men of Galilee, why are you standing there looking at the sky? This Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven will return in the same way as you have seen him going into heaven.”

ACTS 1:1-11

For Prayer

*Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful
And kindle in them the fire of your love.
Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created
And you will renew the face of the earth.*

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