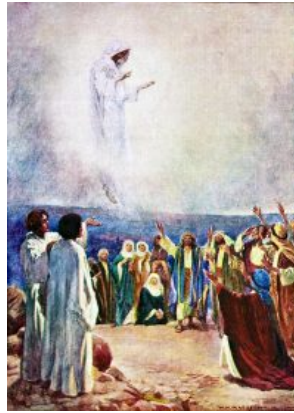




*Please pray for:* Frank & Alice May Purcell (deceased)

**Mass Times: Sunday 24th May 2020 – The Ascension of the Lord – Solemnity (A)**

Sunday, 24 May	<b>No Mass</b>	Solemn Mass
Sunday, 24 May	<b>No Mass</b>	Young Adults Mass
Monday, 25 May	<b>No Mass</b>	Our Lady Help of Christians (Solemnity)
Tuesday, 26 May	<b>No Mass</b>	St Philip Neri, priest (Memorial)
Wednesday, 27 May	<b>No Mass</b>	St Augustine of Canterbury (Optional)
Thursday, 28 May	<b>No Mass</b>	Thursday – 7th Week of Easter
Friday, 29 May	<b>No Mass</b>	St Pius VI, pope (Optional)
Saturday, 30 May	<b>No Mass</b>	Saturday – 7th Week of Easter



**Regular Confession Times:**

Monday to Friday: 11.45 am – 12.30 pm (before 12.35 pm Mass)  
Sunday: 5.30 pm (before 6.00 pm Mass) (*Not available at this time*)

**The Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney Safeguarding Office**



If you or a person close to you has been abused by someone working or ministering within the Archdiocese of Sydney we invite you to contact us. We will listen to you respectfully, offer support and discuss the options you have available to you. *Please contact the Safeguarding and Ministerial Integrity Office on ph 02 9390 5812.*



A VOCATION VIEW: 'Freedom consists not in doing what we like, but in having the right to do what we ought.' – *Pope Saint John Paul II – in honour of his 100th birthday – 18th May, 2020 – born 18th May, 1920, Wadowice, Poland – died 2nd April, 2005, Apostolic Palace, Vatican City – buried 8th April, 2005, St Peter's Basilica, Vatican City*

**Federal Government Announcement – re easing of restrictions for Places of Worship**

Dear all, as you would undoubtedly be aware, the Federal Government has announced a slight easing of restrictions, for places of worship, allowing ten people inside a church for prayer at any one time. The way in which this may take place whilst coordinating the logistical requirements is still being decided. We will update you as soon as possible in relation to this – thanks for your patience and understanding.

**Honouring Mary in May** – you are invited to participate in the Archbishop's Rosary Relay. Nominate and pray one decade of the Rosary with your family on a day of your choice this month. To read more and nominate a day in May, please go to the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney website – [www.sydneycatholic.org](http://www.sydneycatholic.org)

**Virtual Pentecost Pilgrimage** – the Archdiocese is an official sponsor of this *virtual* free pilgrimage which runs until we celebrate Pentecost on Sunday 31st May. The pilgrimage is aimed at helping Catholics nurture their faith in the lead up to Pentecost. Each Wednesday & Sunday, formative videos will be released for registered participants to engage in online. Each set of videos will reflect on the Sunday readings of the week with particular focus on the role of the Holy Spirit in our Church and world. To register, simply go to – [www.pentecostpilgrimage.com](http://www.pentecostpilgrimage.com) – and enter your details to receive a link to the videos, as released.

**Streaming of Sunday Mass – from St James' Parish, Glebe – 5pm**

Sunday Mass is now being celebrated by the Dominican community and streamed from St James' Parish in Glebe (Forest Lodge) at 5pm each Sunday. Here is the link to this Sunday's Mass – Ascension Sunday (24th May 2020) – <https://youtu.be/mFF2-TJmTXA>

Sunday Mass – is also televised by **Channel Ten**, every Sunday at **6am** – this service is called '*Mass for you at Home*' – and is televised from various Catholic churches around Australia.

**The Ascension of the Lord** – Ascension has always been a part of the joyful celebration of the fifty days from Easter Sunday to Pentecost but was singled out for commemoration on the fortieth day (see Acts 1:3) toward the end of the fourth century. The feast develops the glory of the resurrection by acclaiming the exaltation of Christ as Lord of heaven and earth. It serves to prepare the Church, toward the end of the season of Easter, for the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

**Today (Sunday 24th May) is World Communications Day** – read Pope Francis' full address - Google *World Communications Day 2020* & click on the Vatican website link – *LIV World Communications Day 2020*

**Our Lady Help of Christians** – the Virgin Mary has often been invoked in times of religious strife under the title of Help of Christians. In thanksgiving for the release of Pope Pius VII from captivity in 1814, the feast was established the following year on the anniversary of his restoration. The first Australian provincial synod held in Sydney in 1844 placed the Church in Australia under Mary's patronage invoked by the title, Help of Christians. The solemn feast is an occasion to seek Mary's help and protection for our Church and nation.

**St Benedict's now has its own Tap and Go Donation Point!**

As a society, we're using our plastic cards more and carrying cash less. For the convenience of our 'cashless' parishioners, we have installed a *Tap and Go* Quest donation terminal, located at the back of the church, on the right side. With a simple tap of your credit card (or mobile or watch) you can contribute to our parish. **Each 'Tap' is valued at \$5** and is a **NON tax-deductible** donation that supports the running, upkeep and maintenance of the parish. These donations are regarded as part of the 'Loose (or Second) Collection'. Please note: Visa or Mastercard are accepted – and no receipts or refunds can be issued. You can tap multiple times if you wish to donate more than \$5. (Example: to donate \$20, please tap four (4) times, as directed).





exercised for us believers. This you can tell from the strength of his power at work in Christ, when he used it to raise him from the dead and to make him sit at his right hand, in heaven, far above every Sovereignty, Authority, Power, or Domination, or any other name that can be named, not only in this age, but also in the age to come. He has put all things under his feet, and made him as the ruler of everything, the head of the Church; which is his body, the fullness of him who fills the whole creation.

#### ■ The word of the Lord.

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** Mt 28:19, 20  
Alleluia, alleluia! / Go and teach all people my gospel. I am with you always, until the end of the world. / Alleluia!

**GOSPEL** Mt 28:16-20  
A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.*

The eleven disciples set out for Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had arranged to meet them. When they saw him they fell down before him, though some hesitated. Jesus came up and spoke to them. He said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you. And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.'

#### ■ The Gospel of the Lord.

##### A SERVICE OF THE SOCIETY OF ST PAUL

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# Reflections on the Gospel



# THE SAVING WORD

THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD / A

24 MAY 2020

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS, ... BUT HOPE

Having escaped the clutches of his enemies by rising from the dead, the Lord ascends, like the prophet Elijah, to heaven.

In biblical language and imagery this manner of describing the close of Jesus' earthly ministry signals that the One who had been crucified on the trumped-up charge of being a political Messiah has now entered into his true messianic glory at God's right hand.

This entrance into heavenly glory does not mean that Jesus abandons either his disciples or his saving mission in the world. Rather, he will continue to exercise that mission through the ministry of the Church, empowered (at Pentecost) by the same Spirit that rested upon him.

Just before he departs, the disciples voice an understandable concern: 'Lord, has the time come? Are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel?' The query betrays a strong sense of 'unfinished business'. Despite the Easter victory, forces hostile to God and to true humanity continue to hold sway in the world – as the disciples, and we ourselves, remain acutely aware.

Jesus does not give a direct answer. The time of the Kingdom's full arrival remains shrouded in the mystery of God. The disciples' task, meanwhile, is to take up the messianic mission of Jesus, bringing the hope of the resurrection to an often despairing world.

The Ascension is not, then, simply something that happened to Jesus. As the Preface of the Mass says so well, he 'has passed beyond our sight, not to abandon us but to be our hope; where he has gone, we hope to follow'.

## FIRST READING

Acts 1:1-11

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

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

In my earlier work, *Theophilus*, I dealt with everything Jesus had done and taught from the beginning until the day he gave his instructions to the apostles he had chosen through the Holy Spirit, and was taken up to heaven. He had shown himself alive to them after his Passion by many demonstrations: for forty days he had continued to appear to them and tell them about the kingdom of God. When he had been at table with them, he had told them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for what the Father had promised. 'It is' he had said 'what you have heard me speak about: John baptised with water but you, not many days from now, will be baptised with the Holy Spirit.'

Now having met together, they asked him, 'Lord, has the time come? Are you going to restore the kingdom of Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know times or dates that the Father has decided by his own authority, but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and then you will be my witnesses not only in Jerusalem but 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 from their sight. They were still staring into the sky when suddenly two men in white were standing near them and they said, 'Why are you men from Galilee standing here looking into the sky? Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven, this same Jesus will come back in the same way as you have seen him go there.'

#### ■ The word of the Lord.



**RESPONSORIAL PSALM** Ps 46:2-3, 6-9. R. v. 6

**R. God mounts his throne to shouts of joy: a blare of trumpets for the Lord. (or Alleluia.)**

1. All peoples, clap your hands, / cry to God with shouts of joy! / For the Lord, the Most High, we must fear, / great king over all the earth. **R.**
2. God goes up with shouts of joy; / the Lord goes up with trumpet blast. / Sing praise for God, sing praise, / sing praise to our king, sing praise. **R.**
3. God is king of all the earth. / Sing praise with all your skill. / God is king over the nations; / God reigns on his holy throne. **R.**

## SECOND READING

Eph 1:17-23

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians

*He made Jesus to sit at his right hand in heaven.*

May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give you a spirit of wisdom and perception of what is revealed, to bring you to full knowledge of him. May he enlighten the eyes of your mind so that you can see what hope his call holds for you, what rich glories he has promised the saints will inherit and how infinitely great is the power that he has

Brendan Byrne, SJ