

Ascension of the Lord

Year C

Reading 1

Citation: Acts, Chap. 1, Verses 1-11
Acts 1: 1-11

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

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."

The word of the Lord.

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Reading 2
OPTION 1

Citation: Ephesians, Chap. 1, Verses 17-23
Ephesians 1: 17-23

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians

Brothers and sisters:

May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory,
give you a Spirit of wisdom and revelation
resulting in knowledge of him.

May the eyes of your hearts be enlightened,
that you may know what is the hope that belongs to his call,
what are the riches of glory
in his inheritance among the holy ones,
and what is the surpassing greatness of his power
for us who believe,
in accord with the exercise of his great might:
which he worked in Christ,
raising him from the dead
and seating him at his right hand in the heavens,
far above every principality, authority, power, and dominion,
and every name that is named
not only in this age but also in the one to come.

And he put all things beneath his feet
and gave him as head over all things to the church,
which is his body,
the fullness of the one who fills all things in every way.

The word of the Lord.

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Reading 2
OPTION 2

Citation: Hebrews, Chap. 9, Verses 24-28; Chap. 10, Verses 19-23
Hebrews 9: 24-28; 10: 19-23

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews

Christ did not enter into a sanctuary made by hands,
a copy of the true one, but heaven itself,
that he might now appear before God on our behalf.
Not that he might offer himself repeatedly,
as the high priest enters each year into the sanctuary
with blood that is not his own;
if that were so, he would have had to suffer repeatedly
from the foundation of the world.

But now once for all he has appeared at the end of the ages
to take away sin by his sacrifice.

Just as it is appointed that men and women die once,
and after this the judgment,
so also Christ, offered once to take away the sins of many,
will appear a second time, not to take away sin
but to bring salvation to those who eagerly await him.

Therefore, Brothers and sisters, since through the blood of Jesus
we have confidence of entrance into the sanctuary
by the new and living way he opened for us through the veil,
that is, his flesh,
and since we have "a great priest over the house of God,"
let us approach with a sincere heart and in absolute trust,
with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience
and our bodies washed in pure water.

Let us hold unwaveringly to our confession that gives us hope,
for he who made the promise is trustworthy.

The word of the Lord.

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GOSPEL

Citation: Luke, Chap. 24, Verses 46-53
Luke 24: 46-53

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

Jesus said to his disciples:

"Thus it is written that the Christ would suffer
and rise from the dead on the third day
and that repentance, for the forgiveness of sins,
would be preached in his name
to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.
You are witnesses of these things.

And behold I am sending the promise of my Father upon you;
but stay in the city
until you are clothed with power from on high."

Then he led them out as far as Bethany,
raised his hands, and blessed them.

As he blessed them he parted from them
and was taken up to heaven.

They did him homage
and then returned to Jerusalem with great joy,
and they were continually in the temple praising God.

The Gospel of the Lord.