

## Homily by Fr. Anthony Davis

**"Behold, I am with you always; yes, to the end of time."**

May 24, 2020

Ascension of the Lord (Year A)

Acts 1:1-11; Eph. 1:17-23; Mt 28:16-20

A little girl was standing with her grandfather beside an old-fashioned open well, and they had just a bucket to draw some water to drink. "Grand Pa" asked the girl. "Where does God live?" The old man picked up his little granddaughter and held her over the open well. "Look down into the well and tell me what you see", he said. "I see a reflection of myself," said the little girl. Then he replied, "That's where God lives. He lives in you."

Today's readings describe the Ascension of the Lord Jesus into his Heavenly glory after promising his disciples the Holy Spirit as their source of Heavenly power, and after commanding them to bear witness to him by their lives and by preaching throughout the world. But the ascended Jesus is still with us through the indwelling Holy Spirit as he has promised, "I am with you always; yes, to the end of time." Moreover, as our readings describe it, through discipleship, he commissioned us all to "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit..."

Life Message: This is the great commission which the risen Christ gives to the whole church. All believers have been given a share in this task - to be heralds of the good news and ambassadors for Jesus Christ, the only savior of the world. That is to say, that in every single person we encounter we can: – either come face to face with the presence of Jesus, because of that person's sheer goodness, love, generosity, compassion, courage, concern for others. OR see someone who is deeply in need of the touch of Jesus because of their evil or inappropriate behavior, their hates, resentments, and their violence; OR, on the other hand, their weakness, sickness, loneliness, despair.

Thus, during this time of the COVID-19 Pandemic this scripture verse is most relevant. News broadcasts give us the latest statistics regarding how many people are suffering Covid-19, the number who have died, the number of unemployed and the number of hunger sensitive people. Admittedly, there is a lot of pain and suffering, and yet as Christ's "Torch-bearers of Hope", made in God's image and likeness, we, like the little girl discovered, have the spirit and presence of God in us. Hence, He has commissioned us to "Go" into this broken and stunned world, and assure it that: "You will weep and mourn...you will grieve, but your grief will become joy"( Jn.16:20). Yes, "I will not leave you orphans", says the Lord. "I will come back to you, and your hearts will rejoice" (Jn.14:18). And "Behold, I am with you always; yes, to the end of time."

Conclusion: Kahil Gibran, a Poet once said: "Sorrow carves a container for joy...When you are joyous, look deep into your heart and you shall find it is only that which has given you sorrow that is giving you joy. When you are sorrowful look again in your heart, and you shall see that in truth you are weeping for that which has been your delights." In short, *sorrow and pain ought to bring us closer to God and each other!* Therefore, through baptism Christ has equipped and commissioned each one of us with the

skills for the task of being the visible hands and feet of Christ in this endeavor, as in the famous prayer of *St. Teresa of Avila*: "Christ has no body on earth but yours, no hands no feet but yours. Yours are the eyes through which Christ looks with compassion for the world. Christ has nobody on earth but yours." Hence Christ's assurance today: "Behold, I am with you always; yes, to the end of time."