

# The Ascension of the Lord

Cycle B | May 12, 2024

## WISDOM FROM THE CELLS

In prison it's easy to give up on hope or to see the good in anything because of all the violence, back-stabbings and betrayals. There was a time when I began lashing out on myself out of shame, regret and sadness for allowing myself to become so lost, for wasting so many precious years in a lost cause that thrived on deceit, greed and violence, and for all the pain and suffering I caused. I just couldn't take it anymore.

I believe this is when God really started to work in my life because looking back this is when the Holy Spirit started to convict me of my wrongs by allowing me to feel enough shame to want to change and give me enough strength and courage to break away from my former gang and old lifestyle. My faith in my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has helped remind me that there is hope. He has showed me a love and peace like no other. He cares so much for all of us that He was tortured and crucified so that we can all have eternal salvation, but we all must first believe. So for me, it's our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ that reminds me daily that there still is hope, and this includes all who are dedicated to promote God's love and peace.

In short, this experience is another blessing in disguise from an ever so beloved God who has a plan for each and all of us who dare to trust in him. Blessed be God!

- Manny, who is in a California State Prison.



## PENITENTIAL RITE

**Lord, have mercy.**

**Christ, have mercy.**

**Lord, have mercy.**

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life.

**R. Amen.**

## OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray:

Lord,

You lived among people and have gone away to the Father's glory. Though we do not see you, help us remember that you are always with us through your Spirit of strength and love. Grant us the peace of your love and forgiveness.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

**R. Amen.**



# LITURGY OF THE WORD

## First Reading: Acts 1: 1-11

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.

**R. Thanks be to God.**

## Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 47: 1-3, 6-7, 8-9

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

All you peoples, clap your hands,  
shout to God with cries of gladness,  
For the LORD, the Most High, the awesome,  
is the great king over all the earth.

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

God mounts his throne amid shouts of joy;  
the LORD, amid trumpet blasts.  
Sing praise to God, sing praise;  
sing praise to our king, sing praise.

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

For king of all the earth is God;  
sing hymns of praise.  
God reigns over the nations,  
God sits upon his holy throne.

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

## Second Reading: Ephesians 1: 17-23

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.

**R. Thanks be to God.**

## Gospel: Mark 16: 15-20

Jesus said to his disciples: “Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved; whoever does not believe will be condemned. These signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will drive out demons, they will speak new languages. They will pick up serpents with their hands, and if they drink any deadly thing, it will not harm them. They will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.” So then the Lord Jesus, after he spoke to them, was taken up into heaven and took his seat at the right hand of God. But they went forth and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the word through accompanying signs.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**R. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**



# MEDITATION: JOSEFINA

it was an early morning  
when there were  
knocks on the door

as josefina answered  
the door  
once again  
in front of her  
were two women  
stone-faced  
with their bibles

the first one immediately  
begins saying  
the end is coming  
look at the world  
all the wars  
the terrible things  
that are happening  
look at how our leaders  
are the anti-christs  
come to our service  
this sunday so  
you can be saved

as this woman talked  
she was becoming more  
and more hysterical  
worked up about  
how jesus was angry  
at all the sinning  
and at what was  
happening in the world  
she opens her bible  
look earthquakes  
and wars  
these are signs  
that there is not  
much time left

finally josefina

made her way to the jail  
where she volunteers  
every wednesday  
she was thinking  
about how much time  
these religious talkers  
spend speaking about  
how jesus is coming  
their whole focus  
is on the future

she sat down next  
to a young woman  
who had been  
arrested for stealing

josefina's heart went  
out to this woman  
named christine  
she has five children  
who were always  
begging her to  
buy all the things  
that their friends have  
but she never could  
because she only  
earned a minimum wage  
in desperation  
she stole  
now she didn't know  
what was going to  
happen with her kids  
she was so scared

josefina took  
christine's hands  
as she wept  
telling josefina  
how everything  
has turned out so bad  
ever since her husband

was sent away for life  
she asked herself  
why was he so stupid  
to be involved  
in that crime?  
what is going to happen  
to her children?

josefina saying softly  
let me say a simple prayer  
for you christine  
in between her sobbing  
christine said yes please  
jesus  
help christine  
in her difficulty  
help her keep  
her children safe  
help her children know  
how much their mother  
loves them

mother mary  
just like you were  
with your son at  
the darkest moment  
likewise be  
with christine in  
this dark moment

something began to  
happen within christine  
with this prayer  
she began to have hope  
she could feel god  
also close to her

as josefina was  
ready to leave  
christine was saying  
she was grateful

for josefina's visit  
she was feeling  
so much better

as josefina walked  
out of the jail  
she felt how fortunate  
she was to be  
with christine  
she did not have  
to preach to her  
like the women who  
were always carrying  
their bibles rather  
her presence  
her prayer  
her compassion  
was what really  
counted today

josefina thought  
we really don't know  
when jesus is coming back  
but when he does  
she isn't going to  
be sitting around  
she is going to be busy  
with her commitment  
to be a faithful disciple  
of jesus

maybe some day  
these two women  
with bibles would like  
to accompany her  
to the jail



**REFLECTION:** I remember a time I felt moved to make a change in my life... I remember...  
I remember...

### OUR FATHER

Let us pray with confidence to the Father  
in the words our Savior gave us:  
**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy Kingdom come,  
thy will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive those who trespass against  
us, and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.**

**R. For the kingdom, the power and the  
glory are yours, now and for ever.  
Amen.**

### SIGN OF PEACE

Jesus, you said to your apostles: "I leave you  
peace, my peace I give you. Look not on our  
sins, but on the faith of your Church, and  
grant us the peace and unity of your kingdom  
where you live forever and ever. **Amen.**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.  
**R. And with your spirit.**

### LAMB OF GOD

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:  
**have mercy on us.**  
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:  
**have mercy on us.**  
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:  
**grant us peace.**

This is Jesus, the Lamb of God, who takes away the  
sins of the world. Happy are we who are called to  
his supper.

**Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter  
under my roof, but only say the word and  
my soul shall be healed.**

### COMMUNION

### CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray:  
Lord God,  
You have sent us your Son as a wonderful gift and  
have given us your blessing of mercy. Now help us  
be more like Jesus and be moved carry out his  
mission to love and serve others. We have seen all  
he has done and believe, for he is always with us.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord. **R. Amen.**

