

You are Witnesses of these Things

The Ascension of the Lord
Cycle C | June 1, 2025

WISDOM FROM THE CELLS

Every single moment I've spent with my mother, I have felt her unconditional love. I know for a fact that no matter what I have done, she loves me and will always love me. She continues to show me her unconditional love every day because she has always been there for me. I have always known of my mother's unconditional love for me, and it saddens me to admit that I have taken advantage of this unconditional love.

My family would get mad at my mother because every time I got in trouble, which was often, she was always there for me to get me out of it. If I got locked up and had bail, she would bail me out. Even if she didn't have the money to bail me out, she would borrow money.

My family would tell my mother to leave me in jail so that I could grow up and learn, but she would never listen to them and would come to my rescue every time.

I would often ask myself, "Why does my mother love me so much, when I've done nothing for her but cause her heartaches?" It wasn't until I had my daughter, that I was able to understand my mother and that a parent would do anything for their kids.

- Erik, who is in a California State Prison.



Art by J. Salazar

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,

We have witnessed the many great works that you have done and you ask us to follow you. Give us the strength to believe that you are still with us as you continue to speak to us through your Word, and the courage to continue your work of building up your kingdom of justice, truth, and love.

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: 2-3, 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: Luke 24: 46-53

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.

R. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.



MEDITATION: I WILL BE WITH YOU ALWAYS

*(through the eyes
of jesus)*

i was sitting on
top of the mountain
waiting for the crowd
today i would soon
say goodbye
to my friends
it is always hard
with so many things
left unsaid
so much left undone
i knew there
would be tears

i was sitting in prayer
it was a crisp
clear morning
with a cloudless sky
recalling the events
of the past week

i couldn't go home
to my abba with
so much heaviness
in my heart
with the pain
he carried of
the one who had
struck my side
the pain from my heart
and the guilt of
the one who made
my mother weep
so brutally
the one who whipped
and beat me
so much of his pain
was directed
towards me

so last night
i visited the soldier
and said to him:

dachaus
do not be afraid
i am not a ghost
i am here
to heal your pain
the pain
you keep inside
the pain that
causes you to
inflict pain on others

dachaus
i forgive you
for hurting me
and my mother
i know the heaviness
you now feel
i feel the weight
of your guilt
for stabbing me
in the side

dachaus
i am here to
bring healing

weeping tears
hot, wet and streaming
were hitting the ground
mixing with the red soil
a closed door
in dachaus's heart
was opened
and the pain
was flowing out
onto the ground

jesus

i have so much guilt
that night i watched
you die in front
of your mother
at the cross
it reminded me
of my own brother
the night he died
while i watched
helplessly
i could feel hate
slowly growing
within me
that night

we were sitting
in the park and
were approached
by a rival gang
i was looking
for my brother and
stood up for him
while facing
our enemies
gunshots went off
then i found myself
covering my brother
while his blood
was running down
my hands and
wet tears hitting
the ground

jesus
my actions of anger
from that day
when they killed
my brother is
the pain that i carry
to this day

then jesus said:

dachaus
i know about your pain
the way your guilt
causes you to act
and how it traps you
in a cycle of violence
that is why i am here
to tell you
i forgive you
i know you
need healing
this wound in my side
can also heal
if you share with me
your pain
you don't have
to keep it in
i forgive you

now
on top of this mountain
with the disciples
it is time to return
to my abba

i am confident
they will continue
the mission
of healing
of forgiving
even those
against you

do not fear to share
your pain with me
and with each other

i will be with you always
i know your pain
and i always
forgive you



REFLECTION: I remember a time I carried a burden in my life and God helped me... 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:

God,
You have sent us your Son Jesus as a wonderful
gift and have given us your blessing of mercy. May
his great works inspire us to change and become
more like him. We have seen all he has done and
believe. May we now accept his invitation and
follow him.

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

