

## 'WILL THIS SACRED WEEK BETWEEN ASCENSION AND PENTECOST CHANGE US?'

Ascension - 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2019

### A SACRED TIME

The time between Ascension and Pentecost is a very sacred time to all of us.  
Ascension Thursday comes Forty Days after Easter.  
Pentecost Sunday comes Ten Days after Ascension Thursday.

### ASCENSION

Jesus blessed the disciples and then ascended to heaven.  
The disciples **cherished the blessing**.  
How do we cherish the blessings we have in life?  
Let us pause and note some of the blessings we have received from God.

**[PAUSE]**

Let us now thank God for those blessings.

We read now from today's Gospel to see the context of the Ascension.  
Before today's text, we read

*'Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures'*

Let us pray for open minds to understand today's Gospel

### GOSPEL OF LUKE 24:46-53

*'Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer  
and to rise from the dead on the third day,  
and that repentance and forgiveness of sins  
is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations,  
beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.  
And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised;  
so stay here in the city  
until you have been clothed with power from on high.'*

*Then he led them out as far as Bethany,  
and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them.  
While he was blessing them,  
he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven.  
And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy;  
and they were continually in the temple blessing God.'*

### PENTECOST

Ten days later the disciples changed forever  
at Pentecost with the coming of the Holy Spirit.

(In **Australia**, Ascension Thursday is not a public holiday,  
and it can be difficult for people on a workday to get to Mass.  
So we reduce the ten days from Ascension Thursday to Pentecost,  
to seven days from the Sunday after the Ascension to Pentecost Sunday,  
so that we can all celebrate the Ascension together at weekend Mass.)

## HOW DO WE EXPLAIN TO OTHERS HOW THE HOLY SPIRIT CONTINUES TO CHANGE US?

Let us pause and note how the Spirit changes us.

[PAUSE]

Jesus explained at the Ascension about the coming Pentecost.  
In the First Reading today from Acts of the Apostles 1:1-11, we hear

*'This', he said, 'is what you have heard from me;  
for John baptized with water,  
but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.'*

And

*'But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you;  
and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem,  
in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.'*

From today's Gospel passage we remember that:

- ± We are **witnesses to Jesus**
- ± We are **clothed from on high**
- ± We are **blessed by Jesus**
- ± We respond by **worshipping Jesus**
- ± We are **gifted in joy**
- ± We **continue to bless God**  
when we gather as a community in prayer.

### FIRST EUCHARIST

Such a blessed time **with children in our parish community**  
receiving Jesus in the Eucharist for the first time,  
today on the Sunday of the *Ascension of Jesus*,  
and next Sunday at *Pentecost*.

We celebrate as a whole family, sharing this sacred time.  
Thank you to the children and their families who have prepared  
presentations of the children's photos of their lives  
on the church walls around us,  
Celebrating special moments in their lives since birth and baptism.

We thank God for the sacredness of receiving Jesus in the Eucharist.

### RECONCILIATION WEEK

On last Friday morning we celebrated *National Reconciliation Week* Mass with Year 3.  
This coming Thursday at 7pm in our church we celebrate  
an ecumenical Reconciliation Prayer Service,  
led by some of our Indigenous Leaders.  
It will be followed by refreshments.  
It is a time for solidarity, and a time for overcoming racism.  
A sacred time to acknowledge each other before God.

Other events during this week include State of Origin on Wednesday evening. A night off to enjoy the football and family and friends.

#### A NIGHT TO OPEN OUR MINDS AND UNDERSTAND

This Tuesday night at 7.30pm in the church, we have a special introductory night on our faith and the *Sacrament of Confirmation*. One of the Bishops will share with us. Our catechumenate group and our Men's Group will join our parents who are preparing their children for the Sacrament of Confirmation this October.

#### GIVING A HELPING HAND TO PEOPLE IN NEED

This weekend at each Mass, we have a speaker from our local St Vincent de Paul Society.

They reflect back on assistance given to people in need locally, and invite us to help with the Winter Appeal for their work.

Thank you to Anne, Aaron and Damian for speaking this weekend.

#### UNITED NATIONS

And last week, the United Nations and national Governments reflected on the terrible massacres this year in Christchurch, New Zealand and in Sri Lanka, and declared August 22<sup>nd</sup> each year, ["International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief"](#)

HOW CAN WE WORK TOGETHER TO ENSURE THIS DAY WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN OUR WORLD?

AND HOW CAN WE BE IN SOLIDARITY WITH THOSE WHO SUFFER VIOLENCE BASED ON THEIR RELIGION OR BELIEF?

Thank you to those who gave to a Sri Lankan church appeal at a recent Sunday 9am Mass.

Let us give a helping hand, and work for peace and recognize the sacredness of human life.

#### THIS WEEK

Let us pause and ask ourselves how we will celebrate the sacredness of the week ahead.

**[PAUSE]**

Let us pray.

Fr. Gerry

[Readings: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/060219-ascension.cfm>]

[Parish Facebook: <http://bit.ly/parishFacebook02062019>]

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# **ASCENSION OF JESUS**

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