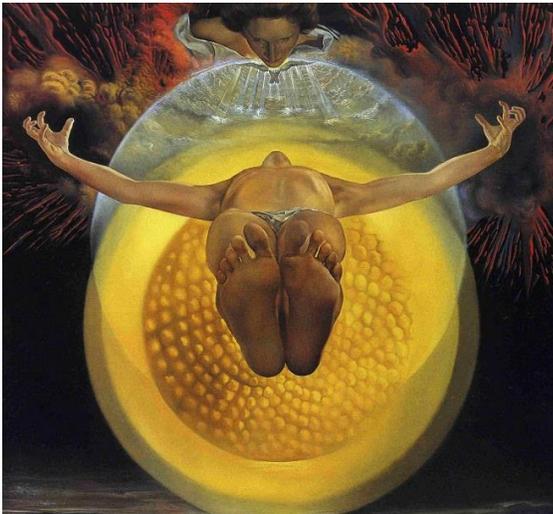




ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

THIS SUNDAY June 2 & BEYOND”

“He Goes, But Does Not Leave Us”



The Ascension of Christ by Salvador Dali 1958

This is the week of the Ascension of Jesus. We will have celebrated that event at 6:15pm on Thursday, May 31, and in its own way, on the following Sunday, June 2, 2019. The Feast of “Jesus Being Carried Up” in the bible is identified as 10 days before the Feast of Pentecost, which is always seven Sundays after Easter. With such chronological certainty in the Holy Scriptures the Church has followed suit, and the 2nd Thursday before Pentecost is always Ascension Day.

I’ve always appreciated Salvador Dali’s depiction of the ascending Jesus into heaven, because I think it adequately shows the way the Bible story describes the apostles as they watched Jesus rise up off the face of the earth and into the clouds above. In the painting you see the soles of Jesus’ feet!

When someone walks away from you, or drives away, or climbs a ladder and you are holding onto it for safety’s sake isn’t that the same view?

And much more emotionally pulling, when someone you care for deeply departs from you, either from a break up, or by deployment, or by any other separation, isn’t that quite often the same kind of view? Not a tableau, carefully crafted to show all things, but more the backside of someone, or the leftover of someone?

Certainly, as we have been hearing through the second half of the Easter season especially, Jesus has been preparing his apostles for just such a moment of his departure from them. And in a grizzly manner; but with hope for them that they will see him again, even if briefly. And so he’s been prompting them to do what he has commanded in order to Remember Him, not just his soles nor his backside, but his face, his teaching, his presence. And that is to lift up bread and wine as His Body and Blood, every time of gathering in His Name. And he has said it will be, in fact, His presence in that bread and wine, now his body and blood.

And the other thing to do to show our desire to love Him as he walked the face of the earth, and now as he sits on the throne of the Lamb in heaven, is to show love for each other.

This whole picture of the Last Supper and of the Ascension needs all four gospels, all four narratives of the Good News of Jesus Christ. But there are only two that speak specifically of that moment of his final blessing and being carried up. Those would be Mark, and Luke.

Here is Luke's telling of it:

“Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them. 51 While he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven.[i] 52 And they worshiped him, and[j] returned to Jerusalem with great joy, 53 and were continually in the temple blessing God.”

Beyond these two Gospels, Luke is unique in that after his Gospel ends with the Ascension, we can then turn to his sequel, the Acts of the Apostles. So not only does he write the Good News of Jesus Christ, he then writes what could be called the Gospel of the Holy Spirit, carried out from Pentecost through the earliest history of the Church, empowered by the Spirit. And the hinge event between the two volumes, is the Ascension of Jesus. The reason, he tells us in the opening verse of Acts, is that his first book dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach until his Ascension, making clear that what would follow were things that Jesus, through His own Spirit, had continued to do since.

With that in mind, the continuity of Jesus, wouldn't you want to put all your trust and faith into the life of this Jesus who may not be physically present like he was, but true to promise, is still with us always? Yes! And its because He is alive. He is risen from the dead.

This Sunday, the Seventh Sunday of Easter (or the 6th after Easter), falls right in the middle of this transition, where Jesus goes from acting through his own physical and historical body on earth to his mystical body, the Church. This is why in the gospel lesson Jesus prays not only for the union of the disciples with him and the Father, but with each other, so that through them everyone might know that the Father sent Jesus out of His Love for the world.

That means that Jesus has prayed for you! And, as we learn from the Holy Bible, Jesus is still praying for you, as is his Spirit. If you have not yet, do as he has asked: repent of any departure on your own from his ways and commands; and believe in the risen Lord Jesus. He will not leave you, ever.

Fr. Robert G. Eaton, Interim Rector

Readings for this Sunday – The Seventh Sunday after Easter

Acts 16:16-34 Psalm 47 Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20 John 17:20-26

CALENDAR

SUNDAY: The Seventh Sunday after Easter

8:30a Low Mass (Church)

10:30a Solemn Mass (Church)

—The entrance to the church is on 6th Avenue—

Note: Coffee Hour & Fellowship follow the Mass in the Parish Hall.

TUESDAY: Noon Mass (St. Mary's Chapel)

FRIDAY

AA Meetings

8:00p Ladies' Group (Fireside Room)

8:15p Men's Group (Parish Hall)

SUNDAY

Day of Pentecost

8:00am Low Mass

10:30am Solemn High Mass