

Easter

THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

BE STILL

Take a moment to allow whatever is in your heart to rise and offer your thoughts to the loving care of the Risen Lord today.

Listen or Sing

Alleluia, Sing to Jesus (AOVI 191, CWBII 449, GA 371)
or via: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bkt-qoeACJM>

Written by William Chatterton Dix (1837-1898)
as a communion hymn for Ascension Sunday

*Alleluia! Sing to Jesus! his the sceptre, his the throne;
Alleluia! his the triumph, his the victory alone!
Hark! The songs of peaceful Zion Thunder like a mighty flood;
"Jesus out of every nation has redeemed us by his blood."*

*Alleluia! not as orphans are we left in sorrow now;
Alleluia! he is near us; faith believes, nor questions how.
Though the cloud from sight received him,
when the forty days were o'er, shall our hearts forget
his promise?—
"I am with you evermore."*

*Alleluia! bread of angels, here on earth our food, our stay!
Alleluia! here the sinful flee to you from day to day.
Intercessor, friend of sinners earth's redeemer, plead for me;
where the songs of the priest and victim sweep across
the crystal sea.*

*Alleluia! King eternal, you the Lord of Lords we own;
Alleluia! born of Mary, earth thy footstool, heav'n your throne.
You within the veil have entered robed in flesh,
our great high priest;
Here on earth both priest and victim in the eucharistic feast.*

Gathering Prayer

Christ yesterday and today
The beginning and the end
Alpha and Omega
all time belongs to him
and all the ages
to him be glory and power
through every age forever, Amen.
Alleluia.

THE GOSPEL

(for the Feast of the Ascension)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark
(16: 15-20)

Jesus showed himself to the Eleven and said to them, 'Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Good News to all creation. He who believes and is baptised is saved; he who does not believe will be condemned. These are the signs that will be associated with believers: in my name they will cast out devils; they will have

the gift of tongues; they will pick up snakes in their hands, and be unharmed should they drink deadly poison; they will lay their hands on the sick, who will recover.'

And so the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven: there at the right hand of God he took his place, while they, going out, preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word by the signs that accompanied it.

The gospel of the Lord.

Ponder

Re-read the gospel. Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013) noted that in the presence of God, during a recollected reading of the text, it is good to practice *Lectio Divina* – the reading of God's word in prayer asking that it 'enlighten and renew' us. The following questions may help with this:

- Lord, what does this text mean to me?
- What is it about my life that you want me to change by this text?
- What troubles me about this text?
- Why am I not interested in this?
- What do I find pleasant about this text?
- What is it about this word that moves me?
- What attracts me? Why does it attract me?

Reflect

Pope Francis in reflecting on the words of the Creed: *He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father* noted:

... the Ascension does not point to Jesus' absence, but tells us that he is alive in our midst in a new way. He is no longer in a specific place in the world as he was before the Ascension. He is now in the lordship of God, present in every space and time, close to each one of us. In our life we are never alone: we have this Advocate who awaits us, who defends us. We are never alone: the Crucified and Risen Lord guides us. We have with us a multitude of brothers and sisters who, in silence and concealment, in their family life and at work, in their problems and hardships, in their joys and hopes, live faith daily and together with us bring the world the lordship of God's love, in the Risen Jesus Christ, ascended into Heaven, our own Advocate who pleads for us (General Audience, Saint Peter's Square Wednesday 17 April, 2013)

RESPOND

Pray

God, as we journey in this Easter Season, bless us with wisdom and hope. Encourage us to keep our eyes fixed on you as we continue in our efforts to live as pilgrim people. Amen.