

Ascension Year B 2018

Beloved, this week we celebrate the Lord's Ascension. Within the same context, we celebrate our own ascension, too. For the ascension of the Lord is our own ascension, too.

The Lord Jesus did ascend to heaven "not to distance himself from our lowly state, but that we, his members, might be confident of following in hope where he, our head and founder, has gone before".

To assure that confidence in his church, the Lord Jesus, before he ascended to the Father, while on the mountains of olive with his disciples, offered the last testimony to his church. The Lord's testimony can be summarized in three data, namely:

1. His universal authority: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me". Matthew 28:18
2. He sent his church to mission: go therefore and proclaim the goodness. Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15
3. His abiding presence with his church and the signs which will accompany his disciples.

The evidence of Jesus affirming his place in Trinity is spread all through the Christian bible. He is the way, the truth and the life, and no one can come to the Father except through him.

John 14:7-8

There is no other name given under heaven through which salvation can be attained except the name of Christ. Acts 4:12

Indeed, the "authority" given to Christ is the glory he already had before the foundation of the world. John 17:6

The solidity of Christ's authority is on the fact that he is in the Father and the Father is in him.

The authority or glory of Christ has not yet been questioned by Christians, however, most Christians are very ignorant of their place in the glory of Christ hence we lose the main route to the Father.

This glory of Christ he has given to his church so that his church may be part of the Trinity. This is evidence in Jesus' last prayer to the Father: "I pray not only for them, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, so that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me.

I have given them the glory you gave me I in them and you in me that they may be brought to perfection as one. John 17:20-23

Beloved, the unity of the Spirit must lead to oneness of purpose. The whole purpose of coming into this world is to make the Father present to the world. Jesus has made the Father known to the world but most explicitly to his disciples. The significance of Ascension is that the salvific mission of Christ is now been handed over to his apostles and through them to his church. The message of Jesus, the task of human salvation is like a baton in a relay race. Two things are important, namely: You must hold it firm and you must run fast; we must not drop the baton of our faith and delay is dangerous.

One asked: What must we tell them?

Beloved in our time and given to our culture, we can make the Father present more by the live we lead than the word we speak.

God is alive and active in the world through the actions of individual Christians and that of the whole church. In Christ Jesus, his actions speak and his words act. Be mindful that our mission is to make the Father present in our world here and now.

It commences from our kitchens and office tables to anywhere we find ourselves each day. While our target is fixed on the glory of the Father, we must be prophetic in the world. It is the will of the Father that we build a world of justice, truth and peace. We must challenge exclusions, corruption, suppression and intolerance. We must challenge anything which prevents the Father being made known. So every morning we should wake up with the question: How will I make the Father known today?

Before we rest for the day we must review our actions.

The ascension of Christ is a call to mission.

“I am with you till the end of time” is a statement which implies that this mission will not be that easy and that we all will need help. Indeed, we need help, we need encouragement and we need affirmation not only from Christ the Lord but more so from one another. Jesus ascended but did not fully leave us. His spirit dwells among us. He is present in his church – that is us. We are his body, the body of the Baptism who follow the paschal candle all through Easter. Today the paschal light is not extinguished but dimmed so that we all may glitter as the light of the world. Be not afraid, he is with us always till the end of time.