

Our Lady of Good Hope Roman Catholic Church

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Ascension Sunday – May 29, 2017

Weekday Masses

Tuesday to Saturday 9:00 AM

Sunday Masses

Saturday – 4:30 PM (anticipated Mass)
Sunday –9:00 AM

Confessions

Weekdays Tuesday to Saturday – 8:30 AM to 8:45 AM
Saturday - 3:30 PM to 4:00 PM
Always available upon request.

Please pray for our sick and shut in parishioners.

May Our Lord sustain, comfort and heal them through their faith.

Mimi LaBossiere, Ann Vinet, Don Appel, Lew and Dolores Hampton, Marilyn McKay, Galdino Berti, Yunha Kim, Gerard Born, George Stock, Jerzy and Irena Klimczek, Rita Rocan, Theresa Witjes, Dolores Azevedo, Amanda Paller.

Last Sunday Offering

\$General
\$ Building and Maintenance
\$Average Weekly Expenses

Thank you for your generous support of your Parish.

Project Advance: Our appreciation goes out to all parishioners who have made a gift to Project Advance 2017. ***To date, we have received 12 gifts (16%) totaling \$8,300.*** Remember that funds received over our Diocesan goal (\$5,000.) will be returned to the Parish. Please continue to respond in prayer and generosity. Our sharing reflects our caring. Thank you.

God's Strength

“Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His power” (Ephesians 6:10).

A strong man may be able to lift a big boulder off the ground, but the boulder is like a tiny pebble compared to what a large moving crane can lift. In a similar way, what we can do for God in our own strength is nothing compared to what God can do through us in His strength.

God wants us to be strong in Him and live each day in the power of His might. It is a good thing for us to discover our weaknesses, because as we do, we are able to turn to God's strength in our times of need.

God's strength means that we can walk through a difficult time instead of running from it; it means that we can do something that would be impossible to do without Him; it means that we can say “no” to temptation instead of yielding to its enticement; it means we

can take the place of a servant and be secure in the place God has for us, without striving to get to the top or be above others.

The Ascension of the Lord

In the First Reading, St. Luke writes about Jesus' Ascension as a visible going up into the sky, which occurred forty days after the Resurrection of Jesus. Jesus is lifted up to where God dwells. The cloud is a symbol of the Divine and refers to the coming of the Son of Man at the end of time on "a cloud with power and great glory" (Luke 21:27).

The Ascension itself is a sign that the mission of Jesus on this earth is completed. There is a change of purpose among the Apostles. Instead of being disciples who are focused on the physical presence of Jesus, they are now *sent forth* to continue the mission of Jesus.

The angel's word to the Apostles is "why do you stand looking up toward heaven?" This is the pivot point and the activity of the young Catholic Church which will spread out from it in circles as the Apostles give witness in Judea and Samaria, Rome and to the ends of the earth. The Apostles, under the influence of the Holy Spirit and with His guidance, begin to act on the commission they have received from Jesus to spread the Good News.

The Ascension assures us that Jesus does not leave us orphans because He has given us His Holy Spirit to lead us. In other words, the Ascension is not about Christ's absence but about the new, spiritual presence of Christ to all of us, wherever we are, through the Holy Spirit. Now, the Risen Jesus is as close to each of us as the beating of our hearts.

The Holy Spirit is at work in you all the time, even when you can't sense Him. He is the One urging you to go to Confession when your conscience is weighing heavy on you. He is the One encouraging you to spend time with the Scriptures or be more attentive at Mass. He is the One who inspires you to live differently, one day at a time. He is always urging you to get to know Jesus better.

Invite the Holy Spirit to move more freely in your heart today. Ask Him to show you areas that He wants to help you change. Let Him give you a deeper understanding of the holiness and love of Jesus. Just as Jesus assured His disciples that the Holy Spirit would be with them, He assures you that the Holy Spirit is, and will always be, working in you.

Stewardship Reflection – Ascension of the Lord

Immediately before Jesus' Ascension, He commissions His followers. In our Baptism we have received the same calling. Baptism summons us to be Jesus' disciples. As His disciples each of us are to be good stewards of the faith that we have received. We do so by sharing our faith with others, especially those who do not yet know Jesus.

In today's first reading Jesus lays out His plan for how we are to be good stewards of our faith. We are to be Jesus' "*witnesses*" and take the Gospel to the "*ends of the earth*". Sounds like a daunting task, yet we have the confidence of knowing that we have "*the power of the Holy Spirit upon us!*" Evangelization is our common vocation as followers of Jesus. We do not need much formal education or formation to evangelize. Our love for the Lord is more than enough to be effective in making disciples in our little part of the world. "*So what are we waiting for?*" – Pope Francis, *The Joy of the Gospel*)

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The Sign of the Cross: How often do we reflect on what we are doing when we make the Sign of the Cross? In *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, Emeritus Pope Benedict said: "to seal oneself with the Sign of the Cross is a public and visible 'yes' to Him who suffered for us, to Him who in the Body has made God's love visible, to a God who reigns not by destruction but by humility of suffering and love which is stronger than all the power of the world and wiser than all the calculating intelligence of men." We are saying that we believe in the power of the Cross and particularly in what it means for our own life – our own bodies will rise again. We sign ourselves as belonging to the One who has won our redemption by Jesus' blood on the Cross, as belonging to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We are signed and we belong to God. The Sign of the Cross is a daily reminder that we are to give to God what is God's, that is, our very selves.