

## Homily Sunday after Ascension

According to the 1943 Lectionary of the 1928 Book of common Prayer. Intended for use by Layreaders in the absence of a priest. Written by Ed Pacht

Today we are celebrating the ascension of Our Lord 40 days after the crucifixion and the resurrection. Christ was taken up into heaven, where he sits at the right hand of the Father, where he rules over the Church he has established and intercedes with the Father for us and our salvation.

Today we begin with the prophet Isaiah asking us to look two ways at once.

*“The LORD is exalted; for he dwelleth on high, he hath filled Zion with judgement and righteousness...”*

He dwells on high but he is not removed from us. Zion, His church, and His people are filled with his presence.

*“Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off..”*

We look to the heavens to behold His glory, and in return we get a glimmer of the beauty that is there, but we are also called to..

*“Look upon zion, the city of our solemnities...”*

Zion stands for the church of God, the place where we celebrate His majesty. We do this in words and in song, in bread and wine, and in celebration of that one holy sacrifice.

*“Thine eyes shall see Jerusalem, a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down...”*

A city of the earth, yet the city of God, where men strive, struggle and fail, but yet a city preserved by God for all eternity.

*“..But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams”*

The church is neither a place, nor is heaven a place as we understand the concept of place. The Lord is our resting place; He is our home, both now in our earthly life and forever.

*“...For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us.”*

In John 17, also known as the high priestly prayer, we receive a good foreshadowing of the ministry of our savior at the right hand of the Father. This chapter contains the most extensive and profound prayer of Jesus we have. He prayed that night, the eve of his suffering and death, as he continues to pray now in His glory, for the people He came to redeem.

*“They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through the truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through their truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word. That they may all be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one. “*

Imagine if you will the power of the conversation that goes on within the undivided Trinity, a conversation that includes all of us, and one that expresses the Savior’s will for our lives.

Imagine this, and then take a look at the reality around us. Do we as Christians manifest the unity of God? Are we divided by our constant bickering? Do we show the power of love that was manifest in the washing of feet and on the Cross? Or...as humans do we prefer to show anger, jealousy and try to make ourselves look better than others?

**Christ has ascended into heaven! May all our hearts ascend to meet Him there.**

Let us pray.

O God, the father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only savior, the prince of peace; give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions. Take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatsoever else may hinder us from our Godly union and concord; that as there is but one body and one spirit, one hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father to us all, so we may be all of one heart and of one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify thee, through Christ our Lord. Amen.