



CELEBRATING AT HOME
ASCENSION SUNDAY

Called to be the living presence of God (Luke 24:46-53)



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Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen

The Lord is here, present among us.

**We are gathered with the whole Church in
this moment of prayer.**

Preparing to hear the Word

Lord Jesus, you came to gather the nations
into the peace of God's kingdom.

Lord Jesus, you come in word and sacrament
to strengthen us in holiness.

Lord Jesus, you will come in glory
with salvation for your people.

Risen Christ,
you always meet us with warmth and love.
**Give us the hope and peace we need
to remain strong in our care of each other.**
Amen.

Scripture Reading (Luke 24:46-53)

Jesus said to his disciples:

'You see how it is written that the Christ would suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that, in his name, repentance for the forgiveness of sins would be preached to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses to this.

'And now I am sending down to you what the Father has promised. Stay in the city then, until you are clothed with the power from on high.' Then he took them out as far as the outskirts of Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them. Now as he blessed them, he withdrew from them and was carried up heaven.

They worshipped him and then went back to Jerusalem full of joy; and they were continually in the Temple praising God.

Reflection - *Called to be the living presence of God*

The feast of the Ascension commemorates the return of Jesus to the Father. Jesus leaves in body but remains with us through the gift of the Spirit. We will celebrate the gift and presence of the Holy Spirit in next Sunday's feast of Pentecost.

The true meaning of our feast today is not found in Jesus' leaving, but in the way he calls his disciples back together, to re-form them as a new community entrusted with the spread of the Gospel. Jesus sends the disciples out to make disciples of all nations and to teach them his way. But the disciples are not left to do all that on their own. Jesus promises that he is with them always.

Jesus has called the ragged, group of disciples, scattered after his crucifixion, back to himself to form them, fragile and doubtful as they are, into a community for mission in the name of God. The task of the historical Jesus is complete; the task of the church as the living Body of Christ has just begun. It is comforting to recognise that Jesus doesn't insist on perfection before he calls us and entrusts us with his mission.

This mission is authorised by God and passed on to us through Jesus. It is not about authority over others. It is actually a call to act as God would act, true to God's heart as Jesus has taught us.

Ever since Easter, we have been proclaiming that Jesus is alive. The feasts of the Ascension and Pentecost help us to realise that we are part of a long tradition of faithful disciples. We have our faults and failings, but our call is to witness to and teach the way of Jesus by the kind of people we are, the values and attitudes we hold, in thought, word and action - to be the living presence of God in the world today.

Prayers of Intercession

Gracious God, with a diversity of gifts and ministries you call us to be your apostles, prophets, healers and teachers.

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Unite us in our efforts to reveal the presence of Jesus and to carry on his work.

As we witness your presence throughout the earth, we are changed.

Sustain us with the power of the Holy Spirit so that you may continue to act in extraordinary ways in our lives.

As we reach out to transform pain and doubt, struggle and chaos,

may our touch be affirming, our words be inspiring as we renew our world in love.

Lord's Prayer

Formed by the teaching and example of Jesus, we pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.**

Thy kingdom come.

**Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

Closing Prayer

God of all creation,
may your glory be proclaimed in our lives
and the presence of your Spirit be manifested
in our church.

Through our risen Saviour, Christ, our Lord.
Amen.

Blessing

May your blessing be upon us, O Lord,
and remain with us for ever.





Journey into the Light

This resource is presented by the Carmelites of Australia & Timor-Leste at a time when many cannot gather together as we usually do to celebrate the Eucharist. We are conscious that Christ is present not only in the Blessed Sacrament but also in the Scriptures and in our hearts. Even when we are on our own we remain part of the Body of Christ.

In the room you decide to use for this prayer you could have a lighted candle, a crucifix and the Bible. These symbols help keep us mindful of the sacredness of our time of prayer and can help us feel connected with our local worshipping communities.

This text is arranged with parts for a leader and for all to pray, but the leader's parts can be shared among those present.

As you use this prayer know that the Carmelites will be remembering in our prayer all the members of our family at this time.



The Carmelites
Australia & Timor-Leste
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