



Celebrating a Liturgy of the Word with Family Ascension Sunday, World Communications Day, Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Preparation – allow some time to prepare

- Read through the outline beforehand
- Arrange seating and set a prayer focus in the centre. Maybe include shoes to symbolize 'go tell everyone.'
- The psalm can be sung to the tune of Amazing Grace).
- There are some links to open beforehand. A song at the beginning and end (same song), and after the Gospel.
- Share the reader role. Encourage your readers to practice beforehand and pause for commas and full-stops. Don't correct children as they are reading or during the Liturgy.

SONG: All The Ends of the Earth © Bob Dufford <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6FDyNx1ceDc>

SIGN OF THE CROSS: In name of the Father... **OR Ki te ingoa...** *Extend a warm welcome anyone else with you.* Today is Ascension Sunday. It is also the start of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and it is World Communications Day. Pope Francis is asking us on this day to connect with the power of story-telling. The week of prayer for Christian unity draws our attention to the story of the shipwreck of Paul. Those who met them onshore '**showed unusual kindness.**' Although this story is not in today's readings, we can still read it and learn from it, the importance of **showing kindness.** Today, the story we hear is about Jesus' Ascension.

READER: Let's begin with a litany of reconciliation. The response is, 'Lord have mercy.'

For divisions in the Christian Church; Lord have mercy	All Lord have mercy
For isolating ourselves and remaining indifferent, Lord have mercy	All lord have mercy
For not showing hospitality to strangers and refugees, Lord have mercy	All Lord have mercy
For refusing to trust one another, Lord have mercy	All Lord have mercy
For mistakes that haunt us, Lord have mercy	All Lord have mercy
For hiding in comfortable spaces, Lord have mercy	All Lord have mercy
For failing to hope for unity, Lord have mercy	All Lord have mercy
For being the cause of pain, Lord have mercy	All Lord have mercy
For neglecting to show kindness	All Lord have mercy

READER: And now a litany of praise. The response is, 'Lord you are kind in all your ways.'

For healing our divisions	ALL Lord you are kind in all your ways
For binding us together	ALL Lord you are kind in all your ways
For making us welcoming	ALL Lord you are kind in all your ways
For restoring our ability to trust	ALL Lord you are kind in all your ways
For overcoming our mistakes and failings	ALL Lord you are kind in all your ways
For drawing us into the light	ALL Lord you are kind in all your ways
For pointing us toward new hope	ALL Lord you are kind in all your ways
For awakening our sensitivity toward others	ALL Lord you are kind in all your ways
For liberating our ability to be kind	ALL Lord you are kind in all your ways

Pause for a time to reflect on these words – notice which words touch you more strongly.

COLLECT - READER Let us bring to mind all we want to pray for. *(Allow silence, 1 minute)*

Kind God, today we celebrate your Son who ascended to the heavens while the Apostles looked on. Grant that he will live with us always on earth, and we with him in heaven. We ask this through Jesus who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

All Amen.

First READING: Acts 1:1-11 *International Children's Bible*

READER 2 Saint Paul wrote 2 letters to someone called Theophilus. The first letter is now called the Gospel of Luke. The second letter is now called the book of Acts. The reading we are going to listen to now is the beginning of the book of Acts.

READER 1 To Theophilus. The first book I wrote was about everything that Jesus did and taught. I wrote about the whole life of Jesus, from the beginning until the day he was taken up into heaven. Before this, Jesus talked to the apostles he had chosen. With the help of the Holy Spirit, Jesus told them what they should do.

READER 2 After his death, Jesus showed himself to them and proved in many ways that he was alive. The apostles saw Jesus during the 40 days after he was raised from death. He spoke to them about the kingdom of God. Once when he was eating with them, he told them not to leave Jerusalem. He said,

READER 1 "The Father has made you a promise which I told you about before. Wait here to receive this promise. John baptized people with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

READER 2 The apostles were all together. They asked Jesus, "Lord, are you at this time going to give the kingdom back to Israel?" Jesus said to them,

READER 1 "The Father is the only One who has the authority to decide dates and times. These things are not for you to know. But the Holy Spirit will come to you. Then you will receive power. You will be my witnesses—in Jerusalem, in all of Judea, in Samaria, and in every part of the world."

READER 2 After he said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up. A cloud hid him from their sight. As he was going, they were looking into the sky. Suddenly, two men wearing white clothes stood beside them. They said,

READER 1 "Men of Galilee, why are you standing here looking into the sky? You saw Jesus taken away from you into heaven. He will come back in the same way you saw him go."

The Word of the Lord

ALL Thanks be to God

Follow the reading with silence. Let some words go over and over in your mind.

PSALM: 47 (These words can be sung to the tune 'Amazing Grace.')

1. O clap your – hands now all you people,
With songs- of joy shout to God.
For God the most high is awesome indeed
A great king o'er all the earth.
2. For God has- gone up with a shout
The Lord with the sound of a trumpet.
Sing praises to God, sing praises indeed,
Sing praise to our King, sing praise.
3. For God is- king o'er all the earth.
Sing praises to God with a psalm.
For God- is king o'er all the lands
God sits on a holy throne.

Second READING: Ephesians 1:17-23 *International Children's Bible*

READER 2 This reading is from a letter Saint Paul wrote to the Ephesians; the people who were living at Ephesus. Paul prayed a lot for these people. He said to them,

READER 1 I always pray to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ—to the glorious Father.

READER 2 Saint Paul asked God for four things from the people at Ephesus. See if you can identify the four things.

READER 1 I pray that you will be given a spirit that will make you wise in the knowledge of God—the knowledge that God has shown you.

I pray that you will have greater understanding in your heart. Then you will know the hope that God has chosen to give us.

I pray that you will know that the blessings God has promised his holy people are rich and glorious.

And you will know that God's power is very great for us who believe. That power is the same as the great strength God used to raise Christ from death and put him at his right side in heaven.

READER 2 Saint Paul then said.

READER 1 God made Christ more important than all rulers, authorities, powers, and kings. Christ is more important than anything in this world or in the next world. God put everything under his power. And God made him the head over everything for the church.

READER 2 Then finally Saint Paul said,

READER 1 The church is Christ's body. The church is filled with Christ, and Christ fills everything in every way.

The Word of the Lord.

ALL Thanks be to God

Follow the reading with silence. Let some words go over and over in your mind.

Discuss: What did Saint Paul pray for?

GOSPEL: Matthew 28:16-20 *International Children's Bible*

The 11 followers went to Galilee. They went to the mountain where Jesus told them to go. On the mountain they saw Jesus and worshiped him. But some of them did not believe that it was really Jesus. Then Jesus came to them and said, "All power in heaven and on earth is given to me. So go and make followers of all people in the world. Baptize them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach them to obey everything that I have told you. You can be sure that I will be with you always. I will continue with you until the end of the world."

The Gospel of the Lord.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

SONG: Let's think about this message by singing this song together - Go Tell Everyone © Alan Dale & Hubert Richards <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y4wsPVyS2QM>

God's spirit is in my heart
He has called me and set me apart
This is what I have to do
What I have to do

He sent me to give good news to the poor
Tell prisoners that they are prisoners no more
Tell blind people that they can see,
And set the downtrodden free
And go tell everyone
The news that the kingdom of God has come
And go tell everyone
The news that God's kingdom has come

Just as the Father sent me
So I'm sending you out to be
My witnesses throughout the world
The whole of the world

Don't worry what You have to say
Don't worry because on that day
God's spirit will speak in your heart
Will speak in your heart

God's spirit is in our heart
He has called us and set us apart
This is what we have to do
What we have to do

READER There are lots of messages we can hear in today's Liturgy. What message do I seem to hear most strongly? *Allow time for some discussion.*

Prayer of the Faithful:

READER: Let us pray together. As God's people, we are called to pray for the needs of the whole world. The response is, 'Alleluia, let us rejoice.'

For the Church – that all Christian churches will strive towards unity, and seek ways to tell stories, pray and serve together as one body.

Silence: **Reader:** Christ has died, Christ is risen! **All:** Alleluia. Let us rejoice!

For the people who govern and direct the world's money systems – that they will wisely use the power they have to bring health and healing to the poorest of the world's peoples.

Silence: **Reader:** Christ has died, Christ is risen! **All:** Alleluia. Let us rejoice!

For poor nations without hospitals and doctors – that they will be supported by wealthy countries.

Silence: **Reader:** Christ has died, Christ is risen! **All:** Alleluia. Let us rejoice!

For all teachers – that they understand the powerful influence they have in children's lives, and that they provide education that is rich, relevant, meaningful and safe.

Silence: **Reader:** Christ has died, Christ is risen! **All:** Alleluia. Let us rejoice!

For all school children – that they will be willing to learn and make the most of their talents.

Silence: **Reader:** Christ has died, Christ is risen! **All:** Alleluia. Let us rejoice!

For grandparents and parents – that they will tell stories to children and stir a sense of wonder that leads to inspiration, affirmation, delight, understanding, faith and a desire for unity.

Silence: **Reader:** Christ has died, Christ is risen! **All:** Alleluia. Let us rejoice!

For India and Bangladesh – that they will be supported as they face both covid-19 and cyclone Amphan.

Silence: **Reader:** Christ has died, Christ is risen! **All:** Alleluia. Let us rejoice!

READER: And now let us pray together as Jesus taught us: Choose Māori or English
Māori at this link <https://www.aucklandcatholic.org.nz/liturgy/mass-readings-in-te-reo/> Words are on the screen.

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.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

COLLECTION:

READER: Something that Christian people do is support people who need help. There are lots of people who need help. Can we could talk about who needs help and what we could do to help them.

- **Your Parish:** your parish and presbytery still have operating costs.
- **The Caring Foundation Covid-19 appeal** to donate, click [here](#)
- **Catholic Social Services Auckland** to donate, click [here](#)
- **The Catholic aid agency Caritas** to support their work, click [here](#)
- **St Vincent de Paul** contact your parish or click [here](#)
- **Cyclone Amphan**

READER: Thank you for your participation in today's Liturgy of the Word. Let us go to be one. To seek to be one with Christians of other denominations. To share with people the good news that the kingdom of God has come. And to love as Jesus loved. May God bless you and your family.

All: Thanks be to God.

SONG: All The Ends of the Earth © Bob Dufford <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6FDyNx1ceDc>

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The Pope's whole message for the 54th World communications Day, at this link

http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/communications/documents/papa-francesco_20200124_messaggio-comunicazioni-sociali.html

Week of Prayer for Christian unity – Resources <https://geii.org/index.html>