

**WEEK:**

The Ascension of the Lord (May 24, 2020)

**MASS READINGS:****FIRST READING:**

Acts 1:1-11

**SECOND READING:**

Ephesians 1:17-23

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM:**

Psalm 47:2-3, 6-9

**GOSPEL:**

Matthew 28:16-20

**KEY WORDS:**

Witness, Fulfillment, Glory, Power, Evangelization, Discipleship, Mission

**KEY THEMES:**

- Christ sent His apostles out on their mission: to evangelize to all people and bring them to baptism. This is what it means to be apostolic; this is the mission of the entire Church.
- Although Christ was given all of the power in heaven and on Earth, He did not flaunt it. He was “meek and humble of heart” (Matthew 11:29), not prideful and conceited of heart.
- The apostles must follow His direction before receiving His commission. We can only accomplish what God calls us to do when we are obedient to Him.

*As you work through these readings, reflections, and questions as a family, encourage everyone to write down*

*any questions that come up. If you are able to answer the questions, great, but do not feel like you have to have all the answers. Encourage your teen(s) and explain that we are all growing in our understanding. Remind them that together, as a family, you will work to find the answers through online research, by asking your parish priest, by contacting your youth minister, etc.*

**THE ASCENT** 

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**Welcome and Introduction (5 min)**

Pick a comfortable place in your home and gather together. Ask each family member to share one “high point” and one “low point” from their week.

**On the Edge of Our Seats (10 min)**

Invite one person to share the opening sentence of a story. The first person then looks to the family member on his or her right side and says, “And then what?” That person adds one sentence to the story. The second person turns to the family member on his or her right and asks, “And then what?” That person adds another sentence to the story. Repeat this process until everyone has added to the story. If time allows, play multiple rounds with new stories or keep adding to the original story.

**LECTIO** 

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**Opening Prayer**

Invite one member of your family to lead an opening prayer, either creating their own prayer or using the following:

Heavenly Father, you have given us a great mission: to make disciples of all the nations. May the Holy Spirit empower us to continue this work, the work of Jesus and the Church. As we encounter our family and friends this week, give us the courage to invite them into a deeper relationship with you. We ask this in Jesus’ name. Amen.

### **Our Voice (10 min)**

One by one, have each member of your family answer the following questions to prepare for the topic of the session:

- Do you consider yourself to be a patient or impatient person? Why?
- What is the difference between waiting because you are being patient versus waiting because you are afraid or unsure of what to do next?

### **Reflection: The Ascension of the Lord (5 min)**

Watch the *Summit* reflection video for the Ascension of the Lord, which can be found on the Life Teen YouTube channel under the Summit Teaching Videos playlist. This video provides a thematic overview to the session.

### **God's Voice (5 min)**

Read Acts 1:1-11 aloud. Before reading, encourage everyone to actively listen to the passage. Invite another person to read the passage a second time. After the second read-through, invite everyone to open their Bibles and silently read the passage a third time. Allow time to pause and reflect between read-throughs.

*If your family does not have access to a Bible, use the online Bible from the USCCB. If you have younger children, ask them to prayerfully listen to the readings as they draw a picture of Jesus ascending into heaven, or print a coloring page of the ascension for them to color.*

### **MEDITATIO**

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#### **Reflecting on God's Voice (10 min)**

Offer the following questions for silent reflection and journaling:

- When have you waited for something because you knew waiting would be worth it? When did you wait or hesitate because you were afraid?

- The disciples were called to move forward but instead waited around after Jesus ascended to heaven. Is there an area of your life where you know God is calling you to move forward but have not done so because you are afraid? How can you overcome this fear?

*If you have younger children, ask them to add more detail to their picture or coloring page by drawing the apostles watching Jesus ascend. Or they can draw themselves and your family watching Jesus ascend.*

### **ORATIO**

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#### **Discussing God's Voice (30 min)**

Following the silent reflection, discuss the reading. The following questions are a great starting point for the discussion, but be open to where the Holy Spirit may guide it. Consider alternating who asks the question, giving each person a chance to ask a question and lead the discussion. As a parent, you should also participate in the conversation in an honest way and offer guidance based on your life experience, but use discretion on what you do and do not want to share about your personal life with your teen(s).

- How would you explain what happened in today's first reading to someone who is unfamiliar with the faith?
- What does it mean for you to be a "witness" to your faith?
- Jesus ascended to heaven but will also return from heaven one day. If Jesus were to return today, would your heart be ready? How can you prepare your heart for the coming of the Lord?
- The reading from the Acts of the Apostles talks about the many "proofs" Jesus gave to the disciples. What "proofs" do you have of God's love in your life?

- Do you ask the Holy Spirit to empower you by helping you share and live your faith daily? Why or why not?

*If you have younger children, consider having this discussion with your teen(s) after your younger children have gone to bed.*

## CONTEMPLATIO

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### **Asking for the Spirit (10 min)**

Pause for a few moments of silence, and invite the Holy Spirit to help you pray. Then, pray the Veni Sancte Spiritus prayer.

*Come, Holy Spirit, send forth the heavenly radiance of your light. Come, father of the poor, come, giver of gifts, come, light of the heart. Greatest comforter, sweet guest of the soul, sweet consolation. In labor, rest, in heat, temperance, in tears, solace. O most blessed light fill the inmost heart of your faithful. Without your grace, there is nothing in us, nothing that is not harmful. Cleanse that which is unclean, water that which is dry, heal that which is wounded. Bend that which is inflexible, fire that which is chilled, correct what goes astray. Give to your faithful, those who trust in you, the sevenfold gifts. Grant the reward of virtue, grant the deliverance of salvation, grant eternal joy. Amen.*

After the prayer, ask each person to offer a prayer for one gift of the Holy Spirit they need (wisdom, counsel, understanding, fortitude, knowledge, piety, fear of the Lord).

### **Weekly Challenge**

Pray the Veni Sancte Spiritus prayer every morning as a family.