



Where Are You Looking?

Are we, like the disciples, looking in the wrong direction? As they looked up to heaven, they probably realized what they had lost. Jesus was no longer in their midst. But then, the Easter stories all tell us that they never really understood his risen presence with them. And so they were asked: "Why are you standing here looking at the sky?" (Acts 1:11).

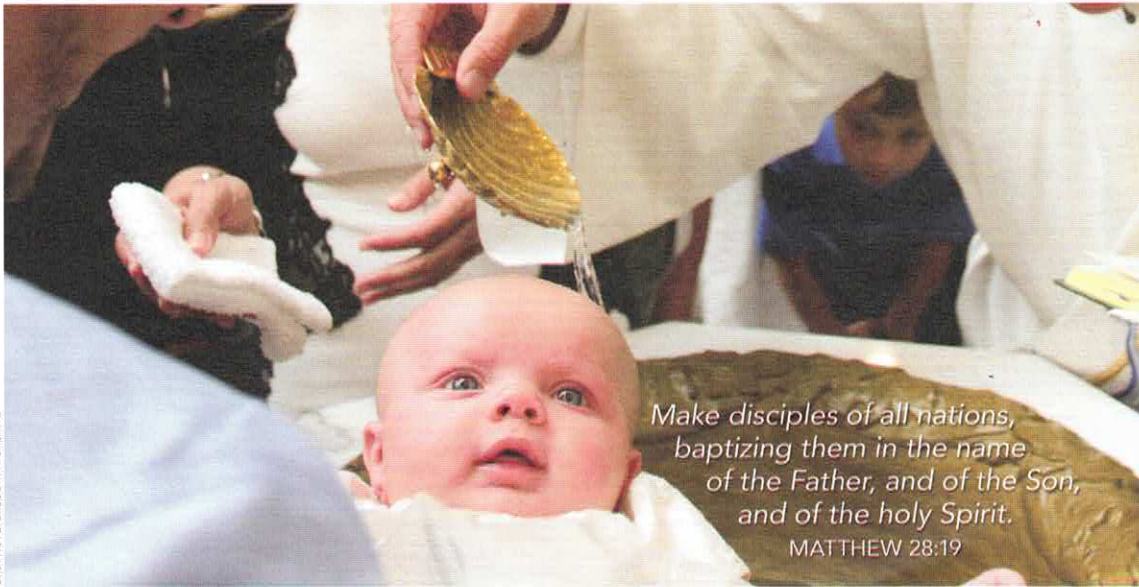
Are we also looking up to heaven when we should be looking out to the world? Of course, it is right that we reflect on Jesus' ascension. However, today's understanding of the universe helps us realize that the biblical account of Jesus' ascension into heaven may be a way of saying that he is glorified with God. As Paul says, he has been granted the place of honor at God's right hand, "far above every principality, authority, power, and dominion" with "all things beneath his feet" (Ephesians 1:21-22). Jesus, now with God, radiates the full splendor of his resurrection.

We must turn to the Gospel passage to get the fullness of the story of the ascension. Jesus did not say: "Watch what is going to happen." Instead he told them to go out: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19). We might know these words so well that we miss their forcefulness. In effect, Jesus is telling them: go out to the whole world and tell them what you have seen and heard. I did what it was for me to do; now it is up to you to do the rest. Don't worry, "I am with you always" (Matthew 28:20). Look where you're going, not where I went.

—Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

FOR Reflection

- ★ In what ways have other people touched you with the mystery of the risen Jesus?
- ★ In what ways do you bring the reality of Jesus to people in your life?



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Dear Padre,

I want to deepen the spiritual sense of Christ in my life. How can I create a strong spiritual connection to Jesus?

Your answer may be within your own parish. I suggest you begin your spiritual journey by connecting with a parish outreach group. When I worked as a missionary in Brazil, I marveled at how the youth groups that I worked with brought a deeper spirituality to my own life.

It was common in Brazil to have a three-day retreat leading up to Lent. Although this was a youth retreat, it also energized the adults who worked with them. The highlight was on Ash Wednesday evening, when the teens would give public testimony at Mass to the Lord working in their lives. Their testimony inspired parishioners to rededicate themselves to educating the smaller children throughout the year. A youth group never lacks in spirit, which is usually contagious!

It's difficult to seek spiritual enlightenment alone. There's spiritual strength in numbers (even Jesus kept twelve disciples near him!), and even greater spiritual power within the graced walls of your parish. When you serve others, your spiritual path is deepened and expanded. Working with youths is just one way to enhance your spiritual connection. Remember the words of St. Paul: "There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service but the same Lord; there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit" (1 Corinthians 12:4-7).

—Fr. John Gouger, CSsR
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A WORD FROM *Pope Francis*

The Church holds out a mission, and I would like to entrust you with this mission. It is to go back and talk to your grandparents. Today more than ever we need this bridge, this dialogue, between grandparents and grandchildren, between the young and the elderly.

—WORLD YOUTH DAY PRAYER VIGIL, APRIL 8, 2017

Calendar

Monday

MAY 25

Easter Weekday

Acts 19:1-8

Jn 16:29-33

Tuesday

MAY 26

St. Philip Neri,

Priest

Acts 20:17-27

Jn 17:1-11a

Wednesday

MAY 27

Easter Weekday

Acts 20:28-38

Jn 17:11b-19

Thursday

MAY 28

Easter Weekday

Acts 22:30; 23:6-11

Jn 17:20-26

Friday

MAY 29

Easter Weekday

Acts 25:13b-21

Jn 21:15-19

Saturday

MAY 30

Easter Weekday

Acts 28:16-20,

30-31

Jn 21:20-25

Sunday

MAY 31

Pentecost

Acts 2:1-11

1 Cor 12:3b-7, 12-13

Jn 20:19-23