Ascension Homily-2025: “It’s not over, we have work to do”

After completing his mission on earth, Jesus returns to the Father. His ascension into heaven may appear to be the natural end-the conclusion of the events, starting with his birth. Does that mean ‘natural end’? If so, okey, what is next?

Jesus ascended from mount Olivet: (Ascension Rock on mount of olives), and his ascension means, *Jesus’s entry into eternal glory after completing his earthly mission.* As the apostles were looking up into the sky, the two men-angels- appearing asked them: ‘men of Galilee, why are you standing there looking at the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven will return in the same way”.

Means, it is not over. You have a job to do. You have a mission. It is just the beginning. This is what Jesus tells them, just before ascending to heaven. “You will receive power, when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth”.

The angels words to them mean: You cannot just sit and look up at the sky, you have work to do. And we know, we are the fruit of that work they started long back in Jerusalem and Galilee that brought us-you and me –to faith, that we are here today as church-as “God’s people”.

What is the spiritual implications of Lord’s ascension in our life. The 40 days Jesus spent between his Resurrection and Ascension is a symbol that signifies *preparation and purification*. Jesus appeared many times to his disciples, to prepare them and purify their faith, because after his ascension, they are left alone, so he would commission them to spread the good news of Salvation in every nation on earth.

St. John explains reasons for Christ’s ascension:

-Jn 14:2-4: *To prepare a place for us in heaven*: In my father's house there are many dwelling places. If there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? Preparing a place for us, who believe in him sincerely, who love doing his will and does his work in serving others, walking in his way.

-Jn 16.7: *To send us the paraclete/the Holy Spirit* "It is better for you that I go, because if I do not go, the advocate will not come to you". Jesus also instructed the disciples to stay waiting until the holy spirit come upon them at Pentecost. - Though physically absent from us, but to experience *his perpetual presence spiritually in our life.*

The scripture assures his followers, after his ascension into heaven, the Lord's perpetual presence until the end of time. These are the means though which he sustains us and nourishes us to continue his mission, here and now, in our world today. He *assured his presence* in the form of the **Holy Spirit**, that was to be sent 7 days later, on Pentecost. His other presences are in the form of his living **Word** and the **Holy Eucharist**.

With certainty, we can be sure that Christ, who ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father, is present in our Christian life, and he intercedes for us.

Christ's ascension asks us to continue his work, his mission, of loving and serving others, from where he left us. You do not have to know everything perfectly about faith to share it. St. Theresa of Kolkata often reminded us: "Christ has no hands but ours, no legs but ours, no tongue but ours", and we are his living presence and witness in the world today.

May we experience him today through his life-giving Word, his presence in the Holy Eucharist, and in the action of the Holy Spirit. Let's earnestly wait, like the apostles, to receive the fulness of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, we celebrate next Sunday. Have a blessed Ascension Sunday.