



# WEEKLY GOSPEL REFLECTION



## THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD, CYCLE A

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*"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations..." Matt 28:19*

Over the past few weeks of this Easter Season, the Gospels tell of Jesus teaching and preparing us for his ascension from this earth, where He will sit at the right hand of Our Father. In today's Gospel, he fulfills that promise. He ascends in a glorious and dramatic fashion, but first He has one last profound teaching. *"Go! Make disciples of all nations!"* Baptize them, not just in my name, but also in the name of the Father and the Holy Spirit. To paraphrase, His words of encouragement, *"I give you, my Apostles, the teaching authority to pass on to generation after generation until the end of time everything I have taught you, and to obey every spiritual law I have commanded of you."*

In this Gospel Jesus takes his Apostles *"up the mountain,"* the place of height and spectacular views where He had previously led them to preach the Sermon on the Mount, then to feed the 5000, and be witness to His transfiguration. This is a powerful moment not only in the lives of the Apostles, and us his disciples, but a key moment in all of human history.

The resurrected Jesus reveals himself in a new way, fulfilling His promises told these past several weeks of this Easter Season, that He must leave us, but not without His abiding mercy and love. He is now the Christ, Ruler of the Universe, with all authority. And it is in that authority that he utters the great missionary challenge to the "eleven" who remained faithful. The word "therefore" is extremely important: *"...go, therefore, and make disciples."* In this inaugural moment of Apostolic Succession, He departs, but leaves us a formula of continuum - His One, Holy, catholic and Apostolic Church.

To all who reflect in Lectio Divina on these final verses of Matthew's Gospel, we are imbued with what in Latin is called "Operatio!" -- "GO!" We are not called to just stand and be awestruck. We are called in universal obligation to evangelize, to *"Go! Make disciples of all nations!"* And in our moments of dark nights, dread or insecurity, we are to etch across our heart His final parting words of encouragement,

***"And remember, I am with you always, TO THE END OF THE AGE!" AMEN***

**A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew**

The eleven disciples went to Galilee,  
to the mountain to which Jesus had ordered them.  
When they saw him, they worshiped, but they doubted.  
Then Jesus approached and said to them,

*“All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me.  
Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations,  
baptizing them in the name of the Father,  
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,  
teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.  
And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”*

***The Gospel of the Lord***