

Sunday School Teachers' Scripture and Feast Day Weekly Memo

Feast of the Ascension of Jesus

From Today's Readings

John 9:39-10:10 *Jesus describes Himself as the Gate through which His sheep pass, following the voice of the One they know. Whoever enters by this Gate, will “find pasture....and be saved.”* (v. 9) Discussion: Jesus describing Himself as the Gate is one of the famous “I am’s” of the Gospel of John, in which Jesus provides a number of images which express His character. In verse 11, He is “the good shepherd.” What do the images of “gate” and “good shepherd” tell you about Jesus? Do you hear Jesus’ voice among the many that vie for your attention....and how do you respond?

Acts 20:17-38 *St. Paul touches the hearts of the church elders in Ephesus with his eloquent farewell. Predicting an uncertain fate, Paul declares his life meaningless save for the task of witnessing to God’s power and grace. He asks these leaders to be good shepherds to their flock, as “wolves” will surely be on the prowl. He exhorts them to always work hard for the less fortunate.* Discussion: These verses exude tenderness and compassion, a marked change for St. Paul, the hard-driving missionary. Does your preoccupation with your ministry tasks become an obstacle to loving others?

1 John 3:2-6 *John relates that Christians are not fully who they will become with God’s grace. And yet only those who truly know Christ can come close to living a life without sin. If we continue to sin, how can we say we know Jesus?* Discussion: In what ways do you “keep on sinning” (v. 6) ? Unreasonable anger? Jealousy? Lack of charity? Neglecting God’s day (Sunday)? According to the epistle writer, what does this say about your relationship with Jesus?

Feast of the Ascension of Jesus



In Acts 1:1-11, we read a full account of Jesus’ ascension (see Mark 16:19 and Luke 24:50-51 as well). After having appeared to the disciples frequently during a forty-day period, Jesus told them to stay in Jerusalem and wait for the gift He had promised: the Holy Spirit (who would come upon them as tongues of fire at Pentecost and empower them to preach throughout the world). When asked by His devoted followers when He would return to “restore the kingdom to Israel” (still thinking of an earthly one), Jesus told them it was not known, but that they would continue to witness to Him “in Jerusalem... and to the ends of the earth.” He was then taken up before their eyes. Two angelic figures appeared nearby as they watched their Lord disappear into the clouds. They assured the disciples that He would indeed return in the very same way. *How do you bear witness in the world to your fellowship with Jesus?*