

June 1<sup>st</sup>, A.D. 2014

**Sunday After Ascension Day**

THE MEDITATION



**“ The Ascension ”**

*by Benvenuto Tisi a.k.a. “Il Garofalo” \**

*Italian Renaissance c. 1515*

*The Holy Gospel according to St. John; Chapter 15, Verses 26 – 27 & Chapter 16, Verses 1 – 4.*

The 1928 Book of Common Prayer, Pages 179 - 180  
The People's Anglican Missal, Page C-29  
St. Joseph Continuous Sunday Missal - ( 1958 ed.), Page 586 – 587

**Gospel Meditation Summary: Jesus promises to send the Holy Spirit to the apostles and predicts future persecutions for His followers.**

**SEEKING HIS FACE**

The Apostles return to the upper room to wait in prayer and longing for the fulfillment of our Lord's promise to send them the Comforter, The Holy Ghost, after He had ascended from their midst. We share in their warm desire for both Christ and for the Holy Ghost. The Introit prayer for today's Mass echoes this: "*Hearken unto my voice, O Lord, when I cry unto Thee, my heart hath talked of Thee, Seek ye my face ; Thy Face, Lord, will I seek.*" ( Psalm 27).

Jesus knew how we would feel at being momentarily deprived of His presence. It was with this in mind that He spoke to the apostles and speaks to us: "*When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth who proceedeth from the Father, shall testify of me.*"

Our Lord, Jesus, makes His promise. We make our prayer. Come, Holy Ghost! Come so that we may not fail You in Your prophecy: "*Ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning. These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended . . . yea the time cometh that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God's service . . . But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them.*" ( Gospel of the Day)

Jesus' prophecy to the apostles has been fulfilled. They, indeed, bore witness to Him with their blood. They were faithful, and their bloody deaths were the guarantee of their fidelity but, was not their victory simply the victory of Christ's Spirit within them?

We can only repeat: "***Come Holy Ghost***" if this prophesy of Jesus has us in mind (and there should be no reason to doubt that). It sometimes seems that so much is expected from us who are so very human and so prone to stumbling and even failure. Your great expectation is that we give our very lives to You. It's not all that much but it's all that we really have, after all the trappings that we cover ourselves with are stripped away. This would be an impossible hope on Your part, unless You provide us with a heart that will inspire our giving. Therefore, we have confidence in Your promise, Lord: "*I will not leave you comfortless : I go away and come again unto you, and your heart shall rejoice.*" - ( St. John; Ch. 14).

**FIRE OF LOVE**

O Lord Jesus, there is so much fear in and around us. ***Come, Holy Ghost.*** There is so much hatred, in our world, and in our nation, ***Come Holy Ghost.*** There is so much greed and materialism. ***Come, Holy Ghost.*** There is so much selfishness and individualism. ***Come Holy Ghost.*** There is so much corruption in morality and society. ***Come Holy Ghost.*** There is just so much hopelessness and despair. ***Come Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful : and kindle in them the fire of Thy love.***

All these vices are rampant in our world, even in our Church, and most especially . . . in us. We ***need*** the fulfillment of Your promise. You must not fail us, O Lord! "*Hearken unto my voice, O Lord, when I cry unto thee, Alleluia ; My heart hath talked of thee, Seek ye my face ; thy face, Lord, will I seek : O hide not thou thy face from me, alleluia, alleluia. The Lord is my light and my salvation : whom then shall I fear?*" ( Introit Verse; Psalm27).

Yours is the best prayer of all : "*Father, while I was with them in the world, I kept those that thou gavest me ; and now I come to thee : I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from evil.*" ( The Communion verse; St. John; Ch. 17).

Our answer to that can only be, "***Amen***".

**PRAYER FOR THE DAY:** *From the beginning you are with me.*

**Prayer for the Week:**

*Creator Spirit, by whose aid  
The world's foundations first were laid.  
Come visit every pious mind!  
Come pour Thy joys on human kind !  
From sin and sorrow set us free  
And make Thy temples worthy Thee-  
Chase from our minds the infernal foe,  
And Peace, the fruit of Love, bestow!*

\* **Benvenuto Tisi: ( 1481 - 1559 )** Our artist for this Sunday was an Italian Renaissance painter. Nicknamed “ *Il Garofino* ” ( Italian for; 'The Carnation', or perhaps in today's vernacular; 'Carnation Guy' ! ) as some of his works were signed with a picture of a carnation instead of his name. Most of his works were religious in nature.

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## **FEASTS, FASTS, and OTHER THINGS**



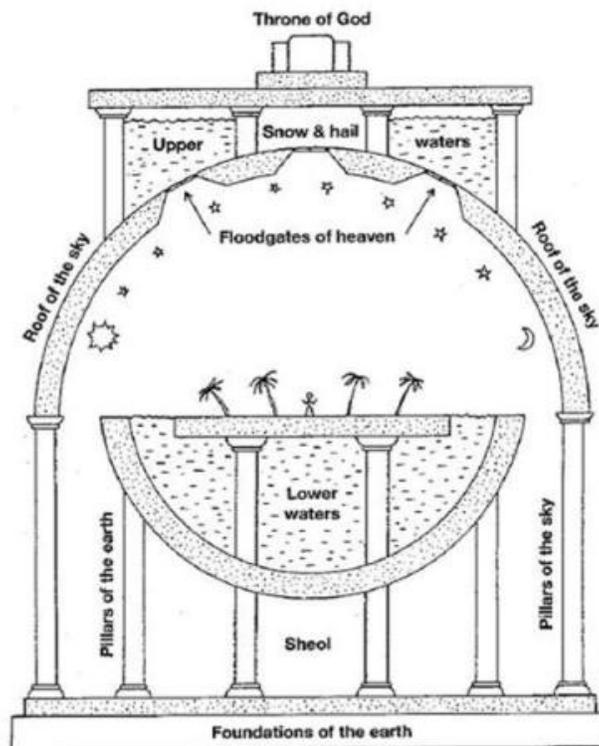
### **ASCENSION - TIDE**

*Ascension-tide* as a liturgical season lasts about as long as a Maine Summer ... if you blink, you could miss it ! It is one of the shortest seasons in the Church Calendar, going from *Ascension* to *Pentecost (Whitsunday)* . . . a mere 10 days. We might consider it a transition time, in a way, from the Easter season to the much longer season of Trinity-tide which from Trinity Sunday will last the rest of the liturgical year. The Feast of *The Ascension* itself was celebrated this past week on Thursday, May 29<sup>th</sup>, and will be the subject of today's presentation.

When Jesus taught in the synagogue at Capharnum in the early days of His ministry, He replied to those puzzled by His statement: “*I have come down from Heaven*” with; “ *What and if ye should see the Son of man ascend to where he was before?*  “ ( *St. John; Ch. 6, Vs 62.*)

He told His disciples at the Last Supper: “*I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world : again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.*” ( *St. John; Ch. 16, Vs.28* ) The letters written to the first Christian communities, which are at the heart of Apostolic preaching, alluded often to the ascension of the risen Christ. “*His exaltation to the right hand of God.*” The rudimentary creed, or early hymn, which St. Paul quoted in his letter to Timothy, ended on the triumphant note that Christ was “*Taken up in glory*” ( *1 Timothy; Ch. 3, Vs. 16* ). The emphasis was on the theological meaning, at that time, and not so much the manner of the ascension.

Poemenia, a noble Roman lady who converted to Christianity, toward the end of the fourth century, built a church on the traditional site of the ascension, a hillock known as the *Imbomon*, ( *see Acts; Ch. 1, Vs. 2-11* ). Early commentators disagreed as to the timing of the ascension, which in St. Luke's second account happened after the apostles had seen Christ alive 'for forty days'. This was interpreted by some, as an idiom for “*a long time*“, but the creed, promulgated at the **Council of Toledo**, ( 398-400; called to refute the heresy of *Priscillianism*; a Gnostic-Manichian sect, and to uphold the *Nicene Creed* ) accepted the literal meaning of the phrase. This greatly influenced the fixing of the festival forty days after Easter, the Thursday of the sixth week of Eastertide, whereas, initially the ascension had been commemorated at Pentecost.



**The Biblical Cosmology image**

The biblical pre Copernican universe depicted the earth as a flat surface with projecting mountains sustained on pillars; below was Sheol, the place of departed spirits; above, where the stars shone, was the vault of the sky; and above that again, God's heavenly abode ( *see illustration* ). An early representation of the clause in the Creed, affirmed by the First General Council of Nicaea ( 325 ), “*He ascended to the heavens*”. An ivory panel, c. 400, shows a youthful Christ leaving the Mount of Olives, welcomed by the hand of God which emerged from the sky, but this yielded to the idea more in

accorded with the old cosmology. Eleven apostles ( or twelve if Paul, an anachronism, is included opposite Peter) are arranged around the Blessed Virgin, assumed to have been present because she prayed with the apostles (*Acts; Chap. 1, Vs.14*). They gaze sorrowfully upwards as a cloud, symbolic of the Divine Presence, but mistaken in art for a real cloud, hides Christ from them. Two men in white apparel, assumed to be angels, address the apostles as 'Ye men of Galilee' and with their gestures explain the cosmic meaning of the event: *"This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."* (*Acts: Chap. 1 Vs. 11*).



**5<sup>th</sup> Century ivory panel Depicting the Ascension**

Ascension Day is therefore, an occasion for joyful celebration. The refrain of the Gospel psalm on Ascension Day, ( and at the Offertory on the Sunday after) is; *"God is gone up with a merry noise, and the Lord with the sound of the trump(et)."* (*Psalm 47*). This is a prelude to His return as; *"A great king over all the earth."* (*Psalm 47.*) Meanwhile, as stated in the Collect of the Day, (which was derived from the Gregorian Sacramentary), our great hope is that, *" we may also in heart and mind thither ascend and with him continually dwell."*

It was customary, before the changes that came to the liturgy initiated out of the Second Vatican Council, to interrupt this season of rejoicing after Ascension Day and to resume fasting during the octave to Pentecost. This has generally been suppressed, but is still observed by traditional Catholics and some religious houses. Here at the Priory, during this time, we eat sparingly in anticipation of the great feast of Pentecost. Your author dutifully observes this practice by not partaking of the goodies from the 'nut locker' nor desserts . . . however, a peanut peanut butter half-sandwich does constitute legitimate lunch-time fare!

The Paschal Candle, which has been used in all major celebrations since the Easter Vigil, is now extinguished following the reading of the Holy Gospel on Ascension Day. It will remain in the sanctuary of the Church until None on Pentecost (Whitsunday) and then removed. It is kept by the baptistry , in some parishes, for the rest of the year and lit when baptisms occur. It's interesting to note, that in some medieval churches, the paschal candle was raised up to the ceiling of the church upon its extinguishing in symbolism of our Lord's own ascension. This certainly had to be a very meaningful and impressive thing to witness, but one has to wonder what kind of machinery they had to set up to accomplish this feat ? !

- Br. Chip, O.S.B.



**Feasts, Fasts, and Other Things;** from **The Chipmunk's Nutshell Library**

Presented by Br. A. Chip Monk, O.S.B. A monk of Our Lady of Seven Sorrows Priory in Raymond, Maine

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**The Meditation** is produced by the Benedictine Community of  
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**SUNDAY MASS OPEN TO the PUBLIC: 8:30 a.m.** *(The Chapel is located on the second floor of the garage building. Please enter by left side door and go up the stairs.)*

*Also, Please Note: There are no Public Rest Room facilities at the Priory, please plan accordingly.*

**PRIORY KALENDAR**

**A.D. 2014**

**Week of June 1<sup>st</sup> to June 8<sup>th</sup>**

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**Sunday, June 1<sup>st</sup> . . . . . SUNDAY AFTER THE ASCENSION . . . in the Octave.**  
**Monday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> . . . Ven. Louis de Estrada; Ab. O. Cist. ( 16<sup>th</sup> cent.) - counselor ..in the Octave.**  
**Tuesday, June 3<sup>rd</sup> . . . St. Isaac; M. & Myr. - O.S.B. ( 8<sup>th</sup> cent. Spain - Note 1.) . . . in the Octave.**  
**Wednesday, June 4<sup>th</sup> . . . . . in the Octave of the Ascension.**  
**Thursday, June 5<sup>th</sup> . . . St. Boniface ( Bp. & Myr. - O.S.B. ( 8<sup>th</sup> cent.) . . . Octave Day of the Ascension.**  
**Friday, June 6<sup>th</sup> . . . St. Norbert; B & C.- ( Germany - 11<sup>th</sup> cent.)**  
**Saturday, June 7<sup>th</sup> . . . Vigil of Pentecost . . . comm. St. Robert of Newminster; Ab. O. Cist. ( 12<sup>th</sup> cent.)**  
**Sunday, June 8<sup>th</sup> . . . WHITSUNDAY (Pentecost) → Please See Note 2 ←**

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**KALENDAR KEY:** *Ab. = Abbot, Abs. = Abbess, Ap = Apostle, Bp. = Bishop, C. or Conf. = Confessor, Comm. = Commemorate. Dcn. = Deacon, Doct. = Doctor of the Church, Ev. = Evangelist, K = King, M. = Monk, Myr. = Martyr, N. = Nun, P= Priest Po. = Pope, Q. = Queen, Vir. = Virgin, A = Abstinence, F = Fast, F & A = Fast and Abstinence*

**NOTES**

**Note 1.** *St. Isaac* is so relevant to our day. Living in Arab-conquered Spain of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, he was raised a devout Christian, he was also educated in the Arab culture and language. After entering the Benedictine order his gifts were used to foster relations between the Church and the Arabs who ruled Spain at the time. Isaac was also a gifted Apologist and debater and found himself often in lengthy discourses with Islamic scholars over Christian and Muslim theologies. Isaac's intellect always won out on the side of Christ. This aroused the Islamic authorities who had him imprisoned and finally beheaded in 851. How little some things have changed . . . Good St. Isaac, pray for us!

**Note 2.** **There will be No Public Mass at Priory Chapel Today - June 8<sup>th</sup>.**

**We are always looking for benefactors to help financially with the animals. If you or someone that you know would like to help, simply mark your check “for the animals”. It will be gratefully received and deeply appreciated.**

**Please consider including our Animal Outreach and Rescue in your Estate Planning. Contact Sr. Mary Francis, O.S.B. For details.**

**Thank you**



You never know when you're being watched !  
( *These cute critters aren't ours ... we just liked the photo!* )

**Due to the very long Maine winter, our funds are very low, your help, in any amount, is greatly appreciated**

**PAX**