

14 May 2026  
“Jesus Returns to the Father”

The forty days during which the Risen Lord had instructed His disciples and led them even more deeply into their mission have come to an end. For the Lord, the hour has come to return to His Father in all His glory. He has completed the work He was commissioned to carry out on Earth and has laid the foundation for the message of salvation to be proclaimed throughout the world. Nothing is more important than the fulfillment of the mission the Lord entrusted to His apostles so that all people might come to know the Redeemer of all nations and follow Him. Jesus is the only way to the Father (Jn 14:6).

In recent days, the readings and the Gospel have spoken to us again and again of the Holy Spirit, who is absolutely indispensable for the authentic spread of the Gospel. Without Him, the fire of love would soon be extinguished, and the truth would be replaced by human fables and the deceptions of fallen angels. Today, on the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord, we hear the passage from the Acts of the Apostles that recounts this event:

Acts 1:1–12

*In the first book, O Theoph'ilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commandment through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. To them he presented himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days, and speaking of the kingdom of God. And while staying with them he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, “you heard from me, for John baptized with water, but before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samar'ia and to the end of the earth.” And when he had said this, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.” Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away.*

In this account, Saint Luke reveals to us what Jesus spoke to His disciples during the forty days following His Resurrection: “He spoke to them about the Kingdom of God,” He conveyed to them the new era that had begun with His coming into the world, with His death and Resurrection, and He instructed them on how it was to continue.

We can imagine how the Lord sat with His disciples and, with patience and perseverance, explained to them what the Scriptures had already said about Him. However, a theoretical knowledge of Sacred Scripture is not enough; rather, the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit is needed. That is why Jesus insisted that the disciples remain in Jerusalem until the promised Spirit descended upon them. Otherwise, their preaching would not have been filled with the Holy Spirit and, therefore, would not have been able to touch the hearts of men, whom the Spirit Himself had to prepare to make them receptive to His light.

In the disciples’ question to Jesus about when He would restore the Kingdom of Israel, we can see that, at that moment, they still lacked that light of the Holy Spirit and were likely still trapped in their own conceptions of that Kingdom. Jesus clearly answers them that it is not for them to know the times or the moments. This is a lesson not only for the disciples but also for us: it is not for us to ask the Lord when this or that will happen. Added to this is the fact that, not infrequently, our questions may be influenced by our own ideas and interpretations. Therefore, let us be content with what the Lord reveals to us.

Indeed, instead of answering their question, Jesus once again emphasizes what is essential for His disciples and for all who follow Him: “*You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samar'ia and to the end of the earth.*”

This is the promise He left to the disciples and, therefore, also to all of us who follow Him to this day: He, together with the Heavenly Father, will send us the Holy Spirit.

When our Lord had accomplished everything, the time came to return to the Father. Before the eyes of the disciples, He ascended into heaven. As they watched Him in amazement, two men dressed in white—who were undoubtedly angels—appeared to them and announced: “*This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.*”

Thus begins a new stage in the history of salvation. The Son of God is no longer

physically on Earth but has returned to the Father's glory. He has prepared His disciples to take on the responsibility of spreading the Gospel message. When He sends them the Holy Spirit, they will receive everything necessary to fulfill their mission. Furthermore, the Lord reminds His disciples once again, through the two angels, that He will return. He has not revealed to us the day or the hour (Mt 24:36), but He has pointed out the signs that will allow us to recognize that His Return is near. Until then, we know what we must do.