



**English Catholic Community
Priest: Don Giorgio Miles**

www.blog.milesonline.eu

Sunday 13th May 2018

The Ascension of the Lord

Newsletter 236

Mass in Italian and English at 10.30 in San Francesco, Ostuni

FIRST READING * Acts 1: 1-11

PSALM * 46: 2-3, 6-9

SECOND READING * Paul 1: 17-23

GOSPEL * Mark 16: 15-33

Commentary

In the *first reading* the disciples see Jesus being taken up into the clouds. They are to carry on the mission of Jesus. This reading shows us that the Ascension of Jesus marks the end of his journey on earth and signals the beginning of a new era. The mission of the Church begins under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The *second reading* is an excerpt from a prayer of thanksgiving that Paul begins by praying that all believers in Jesus will be blessed with wisdom and insight into His ways. Then he prays that believers may be enlightened on three things: hope which comes from the possession of the Holy Spirit; the inheritance of God's life and the tremendous power of God's abiding presence in believers. Just as God raised Jesus from death to life in the Resurrection, so too will Christians experience radical change in their own lives. What happened to Jesus will happen to those who believe in him.

In the *Gospel* the disciples are commissioned to proclaim the Gospel to the whole world, so that all will have the chance to be saved. While many will hear the message, not all will open their hearts to it. Mark names signs that will accompany believers and their teaching will be accompanied by the healing ministry of Jesus. The reference to being able to pick up snakes and drink deadly poison without being harmed is not to be taken literally, it is a Middle Eastern form of hyperbole, a way of saying that followers of Jesus will possess a power beyond their own, to enable them to cope with the hardships of life and overcome evil. So the healing can come from the power of prayer or the power of God in them. If Ascension means being lifted up, then belief in the healing power of God will lift us up when we are wounded.

Jesus' Ascension marks the end of his life on earth and the beginning of the mission of the Church, which all of us participate in by means of our Baptism.

St Matthias – 14 May

How does one qualify to be an apostle? The first act of the [apostles](#) after the [Ascension](#) of [Jesus](#) was to find a replacement for Judas. With all the questions, doubts and dangers facing them, they chose to focus their attention on finding a twelfth apostle. Why was this important? Twelve was a very important number to the Chosen People: twelve was the number of the twelve tribes of Israel. If the new Israel was to come from the disciples of Jesus, a twelfth [apostle](#) was needed. But [Jesus](#) had chosen the original twelve. How could they know whom he would choose? One hundred and twenty people were gathered for [prayer](#) and reflection in the upper room, when Peter stood up to propose the way to make the choice.

Peter had one criterion, that, like Andrew, James, John and himself, the new [apostle](#) must be someone who had been a [disciple](#) from the very beginning, from his [baptism](#) by [John](#) until the Ascension. The [reason](#) for this was simple, the new [apostle](#) would become a [witness](#) to Jesus' resurrection. He must have followed [Jesus](#) before anyone knew him, stayed with him when he made enemies and believed in him when he spoke of the cross and of eating his body, teachings that had made others melt away.

Two men fitted this description, Matthias and [Joseph](#) called Barsabbas. They knew that both these men had been with them and with [Jesus](#) through his whole ministry. But which one had the heart to become a [witness](#) to his resurrection. The [apostles](#) knew that only the [Lord](#) could know what was in the heart of each. They cast lots in order to discover God's [will](#) and Matthias was chosen. He was the twelfth [apostle](#) and the group was whole again as they waited for the coming of the Holy Spirit.

. Don Giorgio's Masses, Sunday 13th May:

07:30 in Sant'Anna, Ceglie Messapica (Italian)

10:30 in San Francesco, Ostuni (Italian and English)

12.00 in San Francesco, Ostuni (Italian)

English mass sheets available at these masses.

NEXT SUNDAY

Next Sunday is the Solemnity of Pentecost. Don Giorgio is not available next Sunday.

BLOG: please keep in contact with our new blog. All of our news as well as other items of interest are posted there regularly. Also other information currently on the English language site for San Rocco is being updated and transferred to the blog site. Each year more couples are choosing to come to Italy to be married, so a new site is being included on getting married in Italy.

In your prayers please pray for:

Departed:

Archbishop Michele Castoro; Fr Damian Sturdy OSB, a Benedictine priest from the monastery in Gloucester; Mario Barletta

Sick or in Particular Need:

Jim Makin, Sareeta Jordan; Martin and Jenny; Rocco who has cancer; Klaus Pesch; Valentina for her continuing recovery.

Please contact the secretary with your prayer requests:

secretary.EnglishCommunity@SanRoccoCeglie.eu