

## Word Sharing Circle (WSC) Reflection Guide

Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord (Cycle A, Year I)

May 28, 2017

### Community Word:

The Holy Spirit empowers us to do the works of Jesus.

### Theme:

We are empowered by the Holy Spirit when we observed the commandments of Jesus and preach the Gospel, and make disciples of all nations.

### Promise:

***"I am with you always, until the end of age."*** (Mt 20:20b)

### Reflection:

The Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord is a very important event celebrated by the Church after Easter and before Pentecost Sunday. More than 2000 years ago, 40 days after his resurrection, Jesus mysteriously ascended to heaven, witnessed by his apostles. But before he was lifted up to return to his heavenly Father, he commissioned his apostles to carry on his ministry and mission of proclaiming the Gospel to all people, while he promised the outpouring of the Holy Spirit: ***"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem.....to the ends of the earth,"*** (Acts 1:8-9).

As his present-day disciples, we are tasked to continue the mission of Christ, to share and spread the Good News of salvation to as many people we encounter, be it in the inner circle of our family, in our workplaces, in various communities we serve, and even in other places or situations where we may meet strangers or unfamiliar faces. All of us are called to continue what Jesus started. Through his apostles and early disciples, we are also empowered by the Holy Spirit as we do our ministry work. In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul speaks about God giving all believers the Spirit of wisdom and revelation so that they may have fuller knowledge of Jesus and to realize the great hope to which we are called – a hope of an inheritance in Jesus, to share in his glory in heaven and as part of his body which is the Church. Hence, we are gifted with what we need to further the works of Christ.

We may experience a sense of doubt that we are not deserving or even prepared to proclaim the Gospel because we have not been trained or have seriously dedicated our lives to mission. In a way, some of us are like the disciples who continued to look up in awe as Jesus was taken from their sight. Sometimes, we may spend needless time just looking and observing, but not doing anything. So, we need to be shaken from our indolence and be roused by what the "men in white garments" asked the disciples: ***"...why are you standing there looking at the sky?"*** (Acts 1: 11a). We need to be challenged to quit standing around, doing mundane things, and to get to work spreading the Good News.

It can be a real challenge to proclaim the teachings of the Gospel to our own family members and even to our brethren in community since they know who we really are with our failings and weaknesses. But this should not stop us. Remember, it was only after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost did the disciples received the spiritual gifts and the boldness to get on with their mission of spreading the Gospel in faraway places. As followers of Christ, we have received the gifts of the Holy Spirit and we should remember to embrace this empowerment and use them to up-build others.

We must not focus on our limitations. Instead, we must awake to the realization of what we have received – the Spirit of wisdom and revelation that enlightens us to the hope of the call which Jesus has given us. Let our theme this week direct our paths: **We are empowered by the Holy Spirit when we observe the commandments of Jesus, preach the Gospel and make disciples of all nations.** For in Matthew 20:20b, Jesus has promised us: *“I am with you always, until the end of age.”*

During Life in Spirit Seminar seasons, let us not be hesitant to accept the task as lay under-shepherds of the Lord for his new lambs, our LSS participants. We need to invoke the Holy Spirit unceasingly to empower us as “spirit-filled” people, who are ambassadors and missionaries of Christ Jesus, as we are all called to be.

**Prayer:**

Almighty Father, pour out and fill our hearts with your Holy Spirit that we may be inflamed by the fire of Your love, to remain eternally faithful to your commands. Help us to be committed in proclaiming the Gospel and leading others to Christ. Give us the spirit of perseverance and courage to reach into the hearts of those who need conversion and receive the gift of abundant life that you have prepared for them. In Jesus name. Amen.

**Reflection Questions:**

1. In what way(s) can you respond to Jesus’ command to spread the Gospel of Christ to others?
2. What does your faith tell you when Jesus says to you: *“I am with you always?”*

**This Week’s Daily Mass Reading Guide:**

May 28, 2017 (Sun) - Acts 1:1-11/Ps 47:2-3, 6-9/Ep 1:17-23/Mt 28:16-20

May 29, 2017(Mon) - Acts 19:1-8/Ps 68:2-7/Jn 16:29-33

May 30, 2017(Tues) - Acts 20:17-27/Ps 68:10, 11, 20, 21/Jn 17:1-11

May 31, 2017(Wed) - Zep 3:14-18, Is 12:2-6/Lk 1:39-56

June 1, 2017 (Thur) - Acts 22:30; 23:6-11/Ps 16:1, 2, 5, 7-10/Jn 17:20-26

June 2, 2017 (Fri) - Acts 25:13-21/Ps 103:1, 2, 11, 12, 19, 20/Jn 21:15-19

June 3, 2017 (Sat) - Acts 28:16-20, 30, 31/Ps 11:4, 5, 7/Jan 21:20-25

***“Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!”***