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PART 1 – OPENING PRAYERS

GREETING

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Christ is risen, alleluia
He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

SENTENCE OF SCRIPTURE

‘Go and make disciples of all nations,’ Jesus commands; ‘I am with you always, to the close of the age.’
Matthew 28.19–20

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

Let us pray
Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleans the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name,
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Christ has entered heaven itself, there to appear before God on our behalf.
Let us therefore draw near in full assurance of faith, and confess our sins to the God of grace.

Merciful God,
our maker and our judge,
we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
and in what we have failed to do:
we have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves;
we repent, and are sorry for all our sins.
Father, forgive us.
Strengthen us to love and obey you
in newness of life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty God,
who has promised forgiveness to all who turn to him in faith:
pardon you and set you free from all your sins,
strengthen you in all goodness

and keep you in eternal life,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE APOSTLES CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father;
from there he will come to judge
the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

God of majesty,
you led the Messiah through suffering into risen life, and took him up into the glory of heaven:
clothe us with the power promised from on high, and send us forth to the ends of the earth as
heralds of repentance and witnesses of Jesus Christ,
the firstborn from the dead,
who lives with you now and always in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God for ever and ever. Amen.

PAUSE VIDEO

PART 2 — 2 VIDEOS, ONE FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN, AND ANOTHER ALL AGE VIDEO FOR OLDER CHILDREN AND ADULTS BY Sam White AND DOWNLOADABLE MATERIAL [HERE](#)

PART 3 — LOOK UP AND READ THROUGH THE READINGS, LISTEN TO THE SERMON PODCAST (READ ALONG IF YOU WISH) BY REV EDDIE MILLAR, AND PRAY THE INTERCESSIONS, TODAY BY JOAN ROWNEY.

READINGS

Acts 1:1-11

Gospel: Matthew 28:16-20

[Available to listen online and/or download – access via Easter 2020 link and notice also a reasonable library of past sermons for you to listen to as you exercise or meditate...](#)

Today we celebrate Jesus going back home to heaven. If home is a good thing, going home is wonderful! Jesus was *happy* to go home. He, the Son of God the Father, *came* from heaven to *this* part of space-time where *we* live, our earth.

He came into this space-time universe which He had made through the Big Bang billions of years before; and He came as one of us by being conceived and born a real Human Being on earth.

And now, 40 days after He had died on the cross and risen from the dead, it was time for Him to go back home to His real home of heaven. (*Well, it was 40 days by 1st Century Roman world counting but 39 days by our counting; but that's a minor detail!*) So, 39 days (or 40 days) after Easter Day, we celebrate Jesus going back home to heaven.

By the way, I assume I don't really need to remind you that Jesus' ascension [or going up] to heaven does *not* mean that heaven is "somewhere up there"! Going up does not necessarily mean "going upstairs". Our Year 7 students at Korowa were on the top floor and our Year 8 students were on the bottom floor, but they never spoke of going down to Year 8 – even though they had gone downstairs!

No doubt Jesus had to appear to go up into the cloud of divine glory to try and get it through to His sometimes thick-headed apostles that He really was going home to heaven; but that doesn't mean that heaven is up there in the sky!

So, today we celebrate Jesus going back home to heaven – to that other unseen world going on all around us in parallel existence to ours. And that means that today we celebrate Jesus being WITH us, all the time, wherever we are!

If Jesus had not gone back to heaven, He could have been in only one place at a time. If He was in Melbourne, He could not have been in Sydney. By going back to heaven (leaving this space-time universe), Jesus freed Himself from the limitations of space-time, *and so, He could be with ALL of us everywhere, all of the time*. As He said to the apostles at the end of St Matthew's Gospel shortly before He went back to heaven: '*And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.*' (Matthew 28:20) This also is well worth celebrating!

Another thing worth celebrating about Jesus going back home is that He did not stop being Human. He had risen from the dead in a real human body. It was the same body as before, because the tomb was empty. But His body was also different: it could appear and disappear and go through locked doors; yet He could invite His disciples to handle Him and see "*For a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see I have.*" (Luke 24:39)

So, when He went back to heaven, He went back in a real human body, but transformed into whatever a body is in God's eternity. And what such a body is, none of us on earth can have the faintest idea. (And, frankly, it doesn't matter!)

And the wonderful news about that is that when He appears in glory at the end of this universe, it won't mean that this universe is abolished; it will mean that all that is good, beautiful and true in this universe will be transformed into what He meant it and us to be. He makes us one with Himself now. He is *already* transforming our human nature – if we let Him, by the insight and surrendering love of faith in Him.

By faith and by our union with Him in Baptism & Communion, we grow in oneness with Him, sharing His transformed human nature, with heaven *already* our real home. Already we have one foot as it were in heaven, and when He appears in glory, we too will rise from the dead and be fully in heaven too.

As St John put it:

Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like Him, BECAUSE we will see Him as He is. And all who have this hope in Him purify themselves, just as He is pure. (1 John 3:1-3)

In other words, we are already one with Jesus, and so are already children of God the Father. But we have to *grow* in that by growing in our union with Jesus. As we grow in the insight of faith we see Jesus more clearly and so become more one with Him in our attitude and being, and so we grow in faith in a kind of avalanching effect until it is all perfected by finally seeing Him as He is.

The risen, ascended Lord be with you & bless you! Amen.

INTERCESSIONS – by Joan Rowney

Let us pray,

Father God, today we celebrate Ascension Day, the day when your Son our Saviour, Jesus Christ, came home to you, leaving your Holy Spirit with us to celebrate on Pentecost Sunday. We thank you for the Holy Trinity whose love for us, your children, brings us great joy and comfort, particularly in these current times when so many people in our world are suffering and dying because of the Covid19 virus and its many side effects financially and socially.

We are grateful that we in Australia have been so blessed with such low numbers of victims and pray for all those who have lost loved ones and for those still struggling with this disease, particularly in those countries who do not have the medical facilities and nursing staff we have.

In fact, in many ways the restrictions we have had has meant that we contact family and friends much more often, sometimes hearing from friends we have not seen for too long and appreciating them more. We thank you for the joy and blessing we receive through the many worship services in which we can join through today's technology.

Lord, in your mercy. Hear our prayer.

Loving God, we pray for those scientists and biology experts all around the world who are working so hard to find a cure for this virus and we pray that they may not be faced with what some viruses do – change into a strain more serious and more difficult to find a cure or a vaccine for.

We pray for our clergy and others who have found that they are even busier because of the difficulties of keeping their parishes, people and groups together, and because of the strain they themselves are under. In our own parish we give special thanks for the efforts of our Vicar, Jennie and Samantha, not forgetting our Parish Council and others whose work continues whether we are physically in church or not.

Lord, in your mercy. Hear our prayer.

Compassionate Lord, In a moment of quiet, can we pray for those for whom we have concerns - our families, our friends and others who come to our minds, maybe also in thanks for blessings and special occasions we have enjoyed, saying "Thank you" to our dear Lord. *(pause now, take time and spend it with Jesus)*

We give thanks for all who have died in the faith of Christ, and in our parish today we remember Wendy Ann Secondis (May 24, 2019) and Valda Ellen Whyte (May 24, 2019).

Lord, in your mercy. Hear our prayer.

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ who taught us to pray:

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done
on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory, are yours now and for ever. Amen.

RESUME VIDEO FOR PART 4 – VIDEO OF HOLY COMMUNION

GREETING OF PEACE [PRIEST]

Christ is risen. Alleluia!
The peace of the risen Lord be always with you.
And also with you.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have these gifts to share. Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom. Blessed be God for ever.

HOLY COMMUNION

O loving God, in union with Christian people throughout the world and across the centuries gathered to make Thanksgiving, hearing your holy Word and receiving the Precious Body and Blood of your dear Son, we offer you praise and thanksgiving. Even though we are dispersed from tasting the Bread of Heaven and drinking the Cup of Salvation we pray that you will unite us with all the baptised and with your Son who gave his life for us.

The Lord be with you,
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts;
We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

All glory and honour
be yours always and everywhere,
mighty Creator, everliving God.
We give you thanks and praise for your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ,
who by the power of your Spirit
was born of Mary and lived as one of us.
By his death on the cross
and rising to new life,
he offered the one true sacrifice for sin
and obtained an eternal deliverance
for his people.
You have highly exalted him,
and given him the name
which is above all other names,
that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bow
and every tongue confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord.
Therefore, we lift our voices to praise you, saying,

Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

And now we thank you for these gifts of bread and wine; may we who receive them, as Jesus said, share his body and his blood.

On the night he was betrayed, he took bread and gave you thanks.

He broke the bread and gave it to his friends, and said, 'Take and eat. This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'

After supper he took the cup and gave you thanks. He shared the cup with them and said, 'This is my blood poured out so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in remembrance of me.'

Christ has died,
Christ has risen,
Christ will come again.

You have gathered us together to feed on Christ and to remember all he has done for us: Fill us with your Spirit that we may follow Jesus in all we do and say, working for justice and bringing your peace to this world that you have made. Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Blessing and honour and glory and power, are yours forever and ever. Amen

THE BREAKING AND SHARING OF THE BREAD AND WINE

As this broken bread was once many grains,
which have been gathered together and made one bread:
so may your Church be gathered
from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

God of glory
you sent your Son Jesus Christ into the world
to preach the gospel of the kingdom.
Strengthen us who share this meal
to continue his mission
by living the good news we proclaim.

Most loving God,
you send us into the world you love.
Give us grace to go thankfully and with courage
in the power of your Spirit.

BLESSING

Christ our exalted king
pour upon you his abundant gifts and
bring you to reign with him in glory;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always. Amen.

DISMISSAL

We go in peace of Christ. Alleluia! Amen.