

# Sunday Reading

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## A Reading from the Gospel of Matthew 28:16-20: The Ascension of the Lord

The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had ordered them. When they saw him, they worshiped, but they doubted. Then Jesus approached and said to them, “All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore,

and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”

### Focus Questions

1. What did the disciples do when they saw Jesus?
2. What does Jesus say He has received?
3. What is Jesus' command to His disciples?
4. What do you think it means that Jesus is with us “until the end of the age?”

# The Mission of the Church: Our Mission

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**Directions:** Read what the Church teaches about evangelization. Then reflect on your own personal witness of Jesus.

Pope St. Paul VI wrote an encyclical, an official teaching letter to the faithful, called *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, or *Evangelization in the Modern World*. In it, he wrote the following:

Evangelizing is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity. She exists in order to evangelize, that is to say, in order to preach and teach, to be the channel of the gift of grace, to reconcile sinners with God, and to perpetuate Christ's sacrifice in the Mass, which is the memorial of His death and glorious resurrection. (14)

...For the Church, the first means of evangelization is the witness of an authentically Christian life, given over to God in a communion that nothing should destroy and at the same time given to one's neighbor with limitless zeal. As we said recently to a group of lay people, "Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses." (41)

The first of these very important quotes tells us that the Church exists to evangelize—that is, to share the Good News of the Gospel. The pope goes on to tell us ways that the Church does this. The next quote tells us of the first way of evangelizing, which is our own witness of life as Christians. In fact, the pope believes that in our modern world our witness is more important than anything we might say or preach.

Each one of us is a witness to Christ. Each one of us can share our example of life and joy with others and can tell others about our relationship with Jesus.

**What is your story? How can you show and tell others about Jesus?**

# My Personal Witness

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**Directions:** Using the questions below as a guide, tell the story of your personal witness of Jesus in a way that you could share with others.

1. What was your life like before you met Jesus? (What was the most important thing in your life? What made you the happiest?)

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2. How did you discover that this life would not make you as happy as you expected or wanted?

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3. How did you meet Jesus? (Did you have a sudden conversion? Or was it over time?)

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4. What was it like coming to know the truth of the Gospel?

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5. How does Christ give you the happiness, security, and fulfillment that you searched for before your conversion? Give a specific example.

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