

**7th Sunday of Easter
Ascension of Jesus
May 24, 2009**

In Mark's Gospel the Ascension of Jesus is not viewed as something sad as we would expect taking His leave of the disciples would be. Instead Jesus is presented as triumphantly taking His seat at the right hand of God. From there He continues to work with and be present to His followers.

Those who believe in Jesus share in His victory. With His power they can release people from the power of demons and addictions that take possession of people. Filled with His Holy Spirit, they will speak new languages and come to new understanding of others, undoing the confusion and limitations of language that came as a punishment for human arrogance in the building of the Tower of Babel. The serpent, representative of temptation and evil, and the bitter enemy of humans since Eden, will have no more deadly power over them. All that is unwholesome in the world will be restored to its original innocence. Sickness and death, the punishment for original sin, will not overpower believers, because Christ has paid the price for our sins.

Mark presents the Ascension of Jesus as the beginning of the kingdom coming in its fullness. With Jesus guiding them, the believers continue the spreading of the kingdom on earth by emulating the work and sacrifice of Jesus. We are the believers in our age who have inherited this responsibility, this mission. Today we celebrate Father Xianghao Shang who has not only accepted the mission, but has made it his life. May Christ always be with him.

God bless you.

Fr. Pat