



Coop's Scoops #41: May 21st, 2020

It's Ascension Day! A Major Feast Day and a day that has shaped my life for over 50 years.

We remember that Jesus departed from this solid earth and vanished into the Kingdom of God...another dimension, another "place", who knows...but a place where there is Someone who looks like us sitting at the right hand of God the Father. A transformed Body but Jesus! When I figured that out, I knew I never had to be afraid of seeing only luminous angels, or transcendent powers or God who is Spirit when I myself go to Heaven. Seeing Jesus, who **looks** like us, will make me feel perfectly at ease and welcome. His glory is our comfort!

The top picture is at St. Thomas Church focusing on the rear Ascension window and the next is the Ascension window over the Altar.

Next is a view of the interior of St. Ambrose Church, showing you where you sit, and where you have come to learn about Jesus for so many years, with joy and with thanksgiving.

And finally is a picture of Notre Dame Cathedral in OTTAWA....our very own! It depicts the rising of all the saints. Every figure represents an apostle, a martyr, a Bishop, Saints who have led the Church in all ages, and a whole wall of lay people who ministered their Baptismal vocations in ways that changed the life of the Church. Every sculpture is as true to the actual appearance of the person as is historically believed.

My friend Rose and I knelt in that Cathedral last summer, awestruck by the beauty and the feeling of the presence of the Company of the Saints, and trembling with the notion that we ourselves are numbered amongst them, and will be with Jesus with them in the Kingdom. And so, dear friends, are YOU!

The St. Thomas gardeners have been uber busy, filling mulch around the trees and rebuilding the rock borders that surround them. The tulips on the entrance side of St. Thomas are glorious as you will see. Unfortunately for us, but fortunately for some hungry critter, the tulips at the main street wall have been eaten....just the tasty parts, all the flower buds and stems, with the leaves pretty but jagged and low. Could be deer, our groundhog or a skunk which has been making itself at home the last few days. Fern baskets will be hung today. Come and have nostalgic look at what you used to see coming in every Sunday morning! To date, the following people have lent a hand to the gardening: Barbara G, Susan, Beth, Rick, Cathy and Bruce, Rick, and perhaps others I'm missing. Catherine T has brought flowers for the indoor courtyard, which I've placed ready for further planting.

Rev. Margaret+ sent along an wise and ironic posting. Took me awhile to get it, but that's just covid-brain! It actually is a very good analogy of what is happening in many of our provinces and our cities. Food for thought!

***The spread of Covid-19 is based on two things:**

- 1. How dense the population is.**
- 2. How dense the population is.**

Appropriate analogy: "The curve is flattening so we can start lifting restrictions now" = "The parachute has slowed our rate of descent, so we can take it off now".

(I don't think I'll take my parachute off until I'm safely on the ground! Never mind falling slower!)

JOKE FOR THE DAY!

A little girl finally got to attend a wedding for the first time. While in the church, the girl asked her mother: "Why is the bride dressed in white?" The mother replied to the girl: "because white is the color of happiness and it's the happiest day of her life today."

After a little bit, the girl looks up at her mother and says: "But, then why is the groom wearing black?"

And One More:

What kind of man was Boaz before he married Ruth? Answer: He was Ruthless.

Scripture for Ascension Day: Luke 24: 44-53

Jesus said to his disciples, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you-- that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.” Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

(The following homiletic was sent in by Jacquie Howell...it expresses what each disciple might have been feeling as Jesus vanished, and what may have been spoken into their hearts by the Spirit)

Stay.

I know how your mind rushes ahead, trying to fathom what could follow this. What will you do, where will you go, how will you live?

You will want to outrun the grief. You will want to keep turning toward the horizon, watching for what was lost to come back, to return to you and never leave again.

Wait and see what comes to fill the gaping hole in your chest.

Wait with your hands open to receive what could never come except to what is empty and hollow. You cannot know it now, cannot even imagine what lies ahead, but I tell you the day is coming when breath will fill your lungs as it never has before, and with

your own ears you will hear words coming to you new and startling. You will dream dreams and you will see the world ablaze with blessing. Wait for it. Still yourself. Stay.

Author: Jan Richardson

Comment from Judie+:

The day that was coming for the disciples was Pentecost. They had been told to wait. They did. And at the right time, they were ablaze with new fire. The disciples literally received new words bursting from them – languages they didn't know but that visitors to Jerusalem could understand. The former scaredy cat Peter blazed forth with a sermon that converted 3000 people in one day. We will celebrate Pentecost Sunday on May 31st, so lots more about that then.

There is also a message here related to our present pandemic. We are all wondering what the future will look like. We know it will be the "same". And there is nothing we can do except Still Ourselves from worry or imaging vivid scenarios we don't like, and then Wait for what is coming, following all the guidelines, and praying, and being thankful, and offering praise for Who God Is, not necessarily for what is happening all around us. We are to remain in our "Jerusalem", our homes....and permitted outdoor areas... While we wait we are to continue in the prayers and the readings and the mediation. That's why something of them is offered in every Scoops.

We wait now for the future around the corner. We wait also for the coming of Lord Jesus. Just as Jan Richardson wrote: Wait for it. Still yourself. Stay! Amen.

The Collect for Ascension Day:

Grant, we pray, Almighty God, that as we believe your only-begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ to have ascended into heaven, so we may also in heart and mind there ascend, and with him continually dwell; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Prayer for the Day:

O Lord , my Lord, I am a stranger in a strange land. Absent today are all the subtleties of custom and language and sight and smell and taste that normally give me my bearings (*and hugs, and gatherings- jc). Jesus, ever-living Teacher, use my out-of-placeness to remind me again of my alien status in this world. I belong to another Kingdom, and live out of another reality. May I always be ultimately concerned to learn the nuances of this eternal reality so that when it becomes mu permanent residence I will not find it strange in the least. In the name of Him who entered a foreign land so that whosoever will might come home to that for which they were created. Amen. *(from "Prayers from the Heart" by Richard J. Foster, HarperCollins publishing, 1994)*

Blessing:

May the peace of God which passes all our understanding keep your hearts and your minds focussed on the love of God and of His Son Jesus Christ, and the blessing of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit be upon you and with you always.

And a prayer just for fun!

May those who love us, love us.
And those who don't love us,
May God turn their hearts;
And if He doesn't turn their hearts,
May He turn their ankles,
So we will know them by their limping.

(you gotta' love those Celts!)