

May 31 & June 1, 2014  
Seventh Sunday of Easter

All Saints Church, Syracuse, NY  
Fr. Andy Szebenyi, SJ

Go! Tell the Good News!

My Dear Brothers and Sisters, I would like to take for the homily today the last few words of Jesus, before He ascended into heaven and the last few sentences from the Acts of the Apostles.

Jesus said: Go and make disciples of all the nations. Not one or a few, but all the nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. And I am with you always even until the end of the world.

And from the Acts of the Apostles we read that it was after Jesus ascended into heaven and was taken from their sight, and the disciples were still gazing up into the heavens, when two messengers dressed in white asked them: Why do you stand here looking up at the skies. Jesus will return. So don't stand here idle but go and tell the Good News.

My Dear Sisters and Brothers. As God is creating us, God brings heaven and earth into a union that has never been before. To be human that is to live in the union of body and soul is a singular event in all creation. And God said: It is good. When God came to us in Jesus, the Son of God, and the son of Mary, the divine and the human were united in the great mystery of the Incarnation. It is not that one or the other, or one against the other, but it is a oneness of all wonders. So our created human life is rooted in both, the spiritual and the physical, and in Jesus, our very being is rooted in both the divine and the human. What does it mean then that Jesus will come again?

The answer is in Jesus' command: Go, therefore, and baptize all the nations and tell the good news that we are to love God, and we are to love one another as Jesus loves us. As we listen to the Word of God, and follow Jesus' example we become more and more Christ-like. And maybe that is the human side of Jesus' glorious return at the end of times, when all will be like the Son of God, and the Son of Mary, Christ-like, both human and divine.

My Dear Sisters and Brothers. To help us in this venture bringing the Word of God to all we meet, and follow Jesus' example, I recommend wholeheartedly the following. Try to find each day a moment of peace and quiet. Sometimes it is possible, sometimes it is not. If it is possible, take the New Testament of the Bible, sit down where it is quiet, close your eyes and place yourself in God's presence. Then open the Bible at random, letting your hand take you wherever it wants to go. Read a few lines, and think about them for a few moments. Then thank God for God's love and mercy. That is all. You will often find in this simple exercise strength, understanding, peace, and healing consolation.

Jesus' last words to us were that He will be with us always. Count the ways. Jesus is here with us in the Word of God, then in the Church, the Body of Christ through baptism, then in the Eucharist that is truly our life, and in the all present Holy Spirit, our wonderful strength and consolation. We are not left alone, but we live in God's love and mercy. Go, therefore, and tell the Good News to all, through word and example. Amen.