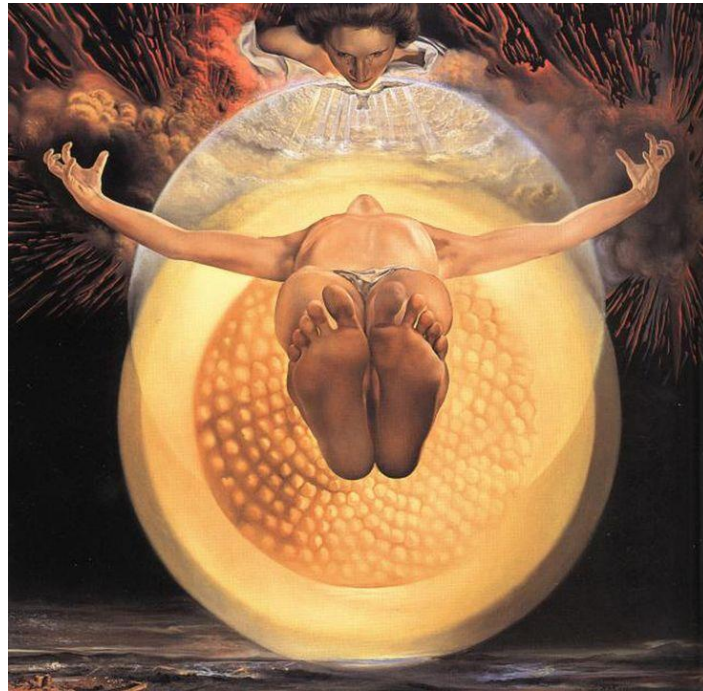




# **Sunday of the Ascension National Reconciliation Week 2019**

**Sunday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2019**

**“You will be as Gods”**



**In the Christian west, Catholics and Protestants – we tend to see ourselves as “sinners”. This focus upon the brokenness of the human condition is only half the truth. We do need to acknowledge our flawed nature reflected in our individual failure and what is always clear with those who have eyes to see, but perhaps clearer today than ever, our collective failure, our failures as a society. The other half of the picture however is the exact reverse and Ascension Sunday is the day when we celebrate what the Eastern Church has long remembered: the call we enjoy to becoming divine, to becoming gods: the theological word, “theosis”.**

**We also celebrate this week, National Reconciliation Week with our indigenous brothers and sisters, which this year is based upon the theme, “Grounded in Truth, Walking Together in Courage”. Part of the call to becoming divine, to becoming as gods, is the act, the ongoing act of reconciling. Becoming as gods, is an ongoing task, an ongoing responsibility.**

# Our Gathering

## Announcements

### Greeting

In the name of the Father, of the Son and the Holy Spirit

The Lord be with you

***And also with you***

We acknowledge and pay our respects to the traditional owners of the land on which we meet – the Darramarugal people. It is upon their ancestral lands that our worship centre stands. As we worship together this morning, let us be mindful of the deep spiritual connection to this land of the Darramarugal elders, past and present, over many thousands of years.

**Hymn: Sing a new song** (TIS 166, Cosmic Praise, James Philip McAuley)

### An Indigenous Prayer

Let's hear a prayer of Prayer of Thanksgiving through the eyes of Indigenous Australia.

God of holy dreaming,

Great Creator Spirit,

***from the dawn of creation you have given your children the good things of Mother Earth.***

You spoke and gum tree grew.

In vast deserts, dense forest,

***and in cities at the water's edge,  
creation sings your praise.***

In Jesus' life, death and resurrection

you heard the cries of your people

***and became one with your wounded ones:  
the convicts, the hunted, and the dispossessed.***

The sunrise of your Son  
coloured the earth anew.

***In Jesus we have been reconciled to you,  
to each other and to your whole creation.***

Lead us on, Great Spirit,  
as we gather from the four corners of the earth;  
***enable us to walk together in trust from the hurt and pain of the  
past into the full day which has dawned in Jesus Christ. Amen.***

*From the Rev'd Lenore Parker, an Indigenous Anglican Priest, from "A Prayer Book for  
Australia".*

### **We light the Paschal Candle**

We light the candle celebrating the Ascension of Jesus who left us a  
mandate to make the world more divine,  
***to make the world an altogether more human place.***

### **The Peace**

Christ is risen!

***He is risen indeed!***

**SMG**

## **LET'S HEAR THE WORD**

### **Some Insights about The Call to become Gods**

We all suffer. It's part of life. The blessing is - while evil exists, Divinity  
does, too, and it is stronger. **Taya Kyle**

Someday, after mastering the winds, the waves, the tides and gravity,  
we shall harness for God the energies of love, and then, for a second  
time in the history of the world, man will have discovered fire.

**Pierre Teilhard de Chardin SJ**

God will not look you over for medals degrees or diplomas, but for  
scars. **Elbert Hubbard**

Western Christians have imagined that, at the end of the day, God is going to throw the present space-time universe into a trash-can and we'll be sitting on clouds playing harps above the skies. The ultimate future that we're promised is much more interesting than that. It is new heavens and a new Earth with new bodies to live in and a new politics that serves all. **N. T. Wright**

### **Acts 1:1-11**

Jeanette Steer

This is a story about the Ascension of Jesus: his apparent escalation, to the heavens, to God; a pictorial way of confirming the idea that God 'signs off' on the legitimacy of Jesus' life and actions. For the early Christians it was a case of Elijah revisited: remember Elijah's departure into heaven in a chariot? But the emphasis of this reading is not on escaping to heaven. Quite the contrary! The idea is this: that Jesus' escalation serves to confirm the truth of his life...and so we are invited to live like him...truthfully, and in like form, to be a gods. To become genuinely god-like then is to take responsibility for the human reality in which we are immersed. Accordingly, in our reading, the disciples are directed back to reality, discouraged from staring into the heavens. The angels are smilingly saying "get on with the job with living, take responsibility for your community, your society, for the world"!

**1** <sup>1-5</sup> Dear Theophilus, in the first volume of this book I wrote on everything that Jesus began to do and teach until the day he said good-bye to the apostles, the ones he had chosen through the Holy Spirit, and was taken up to heaven. After his death, he presented himself alive to them in many different settings over a period of forty days. In face-to-face meetings, he talked to them about things concerning the kingdom of God. As they met and ate meals together, he told them that they were on no account to leave Jerusalem but "must wait for what the Father promised: the promise you heard from me. John baptized in water; you will be baptized in the Holy Spirit. And soon."

**6** When they were together for the last time they asked, "Master, are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel now? Is this the time?"

**7-8** He told them, "You don't get to know the time. Timing is the Father's business. What you'll get is the Holy Spirit. And when the Holy Spirit comes on you, you will be able to be my witnesses in Jerusalem, all over Judea and Samaria, even to the ends of the world."

**9-11** These were his last words. As they watched, he was taken up and disappeared in a cloud. They stood there, staring into the empty sky.

Suddenly two men appeared—in white robes! They said, “You Galileans! why do you just stand here looking up at an empty sky? This very Jesus who was taken up from among you to heaven will come as certainly—and mysteriously—as he left.”

### **Ephesians 1:20-23**

Ephesians is all about the way in which the crucified Christ becomes the ruler of the universe. It provides what we call a Christian cosmology. As such, it also speaks about the authority of Jesus and by extension the authority of the Church. Certainly, there is in Ephesians then, what we call a *public theology*, a theology that is not just limited to private belief. That said theology and faith that are public in nature, have to be interpreted carefully, especially in the light of serious church excesses, such as the dark history of the Inquisition (12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries), where that authority was abused, and most recently, the horror of paedophilia, which the Church has not managed well. In essence, *any authority that the church claims* must reflect the serving generosity of the man Jesus.

<sup>20-23</sup> All this energy issues from Christ: God raised him from death and set him on a throne in deep heaven, in charge of running the universe, everything from galaxies to governments, no name and no power exempt from his rule. And not just for the time being, but *forever*. He is in charge of it all, has the final word on everything. At the centre of all this, Christ rules the church. The church, you see, is not peripheral to the world; the world is peripheral to the church. The church is Christ's body, in which he speaks and acts, by which he fills everything with his presence.

### **Matthew 28:16-20**

**Gilda Dornan**

Again, the question of authority pops up. For Matthew, the Christian church enjoys an authority, but it is not one that confidently claims universal knowledge about everything. The Church does not possess automatic, divine authority about things scientific, or things political, or indeed anything else. The Church *does* however possess the authority, the sole authority to teach what Jesus has taught about God's action in history through the Kingdom of God. The Church is the sole body, authorized to impart the values of the Gospel and what they suggest for the way people think about the world and how they ultimately live.

<sup>16</sup>Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. <sup>17</sup>When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. <sup>18</sup>And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup>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, <sup>20</sup>and teaching them to obey

everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

The Gospel of the Lord

**Praise to you Lord Christ**

**Some thoughts about “becoming gods”**

**Let’s Give: Our Offerings**

**Doxology**

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,  
praise him, all creatures here below,  
praise him above, ye heavenly host,  
praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.***

**Eucharist**

**Hymn: Fairest Lord Jesus** (TiS 203, Anon, St Elizabeth)

**Great Prayer of Thanksgiving**

May the God of resounding joy be with you!

***And also with you!***

Easter people, may your hearts be filled with joy!

***May God fill our emptiness with the carols of angels!***

Children of the resurrection, lift your praises to God!

***We join with all creation in shouting our praise  
to the One who loves us!***

From the rubble of chaos,  
you shaped a sanctuary for creation.

Trumpeter swans glided gracefully across lakes,  
tall trees waltzed across green fields,  
stars piped choruses of joy in the night.

Having formed us in your image,  
your Spirit breathed peace into us,  
inviting us to freely wander.

But we chose to hide ourselves behind  
the locked doors of brokenness and death.

Prophets came to witness about your  
willingness to forgive and  
take our fears from us.

When we would not respond  
to your gracious invitations,  
Jesus came, to free us from our brokenness.

With our ancestors in the faith,  
with our children and grandchildren,  
with everyone who sees you coming,  
we state our glad praise to you:

***Holy, holy, holy, God of surpassing greatness.  
Everything that breathes praises you.  
Hosanna in the highest!***

***Blessed is the One who you exalt.  
Hosanna in the highest!***

Holy are you, God of our ancestors,  
and blessed is Jesus Christ, the first and last.  
Co-creator of all that is around us,  
he came to bear witness to your promises.  
Our Lord as well as our God,  
he blesses all who believe in him  
whether or not they have seen him.  
Serving you in life as well as death,  
he became the first-born of the dead,  
so we might be your children through eternity.

As we remember all he did and taught,  
as we celebrate the wonder of his resurrection,  
we state that mystery we call faith:

***Christ died for us;  
Christ rose for us;  
Christ will come for us.***

## Institution

### Lord's Prayer

Let us say the 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 forever. Amen.***

하늘에 계신 우리 아버지여  
이름이 거룩히 여김을 받으시오며  
나라이 임하옵시며  
뜻이 하늘에서 이룬 것 같이  
땅에서도 이루어지이다.  
오늘날 우리에게 일용할 양식을 주옵시고  
우리가 우리에게  
죄 지은 자를 사하여 준 것 같이  
우리 죄를 사하여 주옵시고  
우리를 시험에 들게 하지 마옵시고  
다만 악에서 구하옵소서  
대개 나라와 권세와 영광이  
아버지께 영원히 있사옵나이다. 아멘



## **Breaking of the Bread**

Christ is the bread of joy  
***Who shares food with us***

Christ is the cup of life,  
***Who revives us***

Let us receive what we are;  
***Let us become what we receive***

## **Lamb of God (Agnus Dei)**

Jesus, Wisdom of God,  
***have mercy on us***

Jesus, Word made flesh,  
***have mercy on us***

Jesus, Liberator of creation  
***grant us peace.***

## **Communion**

### **Distribution**

#### **Bread and wine are distributed among the people**

We come forward as a family to partake of the elements together at the Communion Table. The cup on the right-hand side as you face the table is unfermented grape juice and the cup on the left-hand side is alcoholic wine.

### **Prayer after Communion**

God of heaven and earth,  
 you make us one in Christ.

Inspire us with new vision  
 and the wisdom of ancient dreams.

Give us strength to walk together as an Easter people  
 seeing things differently.

***In Christ's name***

***Amen***

## **Prayers of the People**

Colin Bradford

The one who prays offers the following words at the end of each series of petitions, "You call us to be gods". The people respond, "May we become what you have made us".

**Closing Hymn: My heart and voice I raise** (TiS 225, Ascalon, Benjamin Rhodes)

## **Blessing and Sending Out**

Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed!

We see reality through resurrection  
We look to the signs of a new world  
We live out the signs of this new world.

The service has ended  
Go in peace to love and serve the Lord  
***In the name of Christ***

**Blessing as we leave: May the feet of God** (TiS 779, Aubrey, Aubrey Podlich)

**Closing Postlude**

**Organist**

Jeanette Steer