

Fr. Romeo Evangelista Homily  
Sunday, May 12, 2024  
Ascension Sunday  
Cycle B

They say that one of the indications of growing old is fondness for reminiscences, for nostalgia, for remembering events or people long gone. That is why listening to our grandparents, we patiently endured the repeated stories about World War II, Vietnam war, or the glories of their favorite dead presidents. So, the next time you catch yourself pining for things of the past, watch out – you might be growing old.

Many people are comfortable with the past and cling to it with all their might. If possible, they want to return to the past because the past is a safer haven, a better time, a better condition. Some of them cannot let go. They do not want to move on. They want to return to that which is no longer here.

At this feast of the Ascension, we can imagine the apostles overjoyed that Jesus has risen from the dead. They start to believe that things will be just the same as before. Jesus will be present and do for them what he used to do before the event of the Cross. They want to resume their interrupted life with the Lord. But Jesus, at the Ascension, teaches his disciples that they need to let go of the past. What's more important than the past is the present and the future. We cannot forget the past for its many lessons. But we cannot dwell in the past. We must move on and reach out to the future.

Jesus assures them that he will still lead and guide, protect and direct them, but not as before. Rather, it will happen in new ways. While Jesus is no longer physically present, he is more powerfully present spiritually, as the group of disciples move on with their mission. The Ascension must happen because the earthly work of Jesus is finished. The exciting mission of the apostles start. They must learn to let go and let God take over the present and future.

Jesus wants us all to experience our own ascension. Do you need to let go of past security so that you can face new challenges? Then let go and face the present with courage and hope. Do you need to let go of people – a man or a woman you probably love so much, so that you can start living again? Let go and notice the many others who truly love and care for you.

Do you need to let go of dreams or ambitions that seem never to materialize? Let go and start carving your future from what is possible and concrete. Do not live in the clouds. Like the apostles, allow these things to ascend to heaven and direct your gaze on the projects that need to be done in your life today. There is promise here and now.

The Ascension needed to happen to Jesus and his disciples so that growth may happen for both. Jesus will be enthroned in heaven. The disciples will take charge over the mission Jesus started in them. Let that happen to you, too. Let go and let God!