Ascension

Mother’s Day

MDP of God

I just want to start by wishing to all the Mom’s—and all those who play a Mother like role in the lives of young people—a very happy Mother’s Day

Today we celebrate the great feast of the Ascension of Our Lord—this feast has a very special place in my heart because my first parish was Ascension Parish on the westside of Cleveland

In our readings today we see *Jesus give a job to the Apostles*—they are to go and make disciples of all nations

That’s really the Mission statement of the Church—to go and make disciples of all nations

 *And we my friends, are the Church*—**that’s our Mission statement**

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Jesus is the One who gives hope to our lives—Jesus is the One who gives meaning to our lives—Jesus should impact every aspect of our lives

St Paul in our 2nd reading today gives insight on how that should unfold in our lives—he appeals to us as a prisoner of Christ—and he says,

I, a prisoner for the Lord,
urge you to live in a manner worthy of the call you have received,
with all humility and gentleness, with patience,
bearing with one another through love,
striving to preserve the unity of the spirit
through the bond of peace:
one body and one Spirit,
as you were also called to the one hope of your call;
one Lord, one faith, one baptism;
one God and Father of all,
who is over all and through all and in all.

You see as followers of Jesus we are to live lives of love—building unity and peace

 And I think these readings today are very appropriate for Mother’s Day

*Most mom’s live that example*—of gentleness—seeking to build peace in their families

They seek to build a bond of unity—teaching by example that brothers and sisters should love one another –and care for one another—be patient with one another [tough job]

Now unfortunately— not every mom lives up to those ideals—*but* *most of us have so much to be grateful for—that we had moms who really loved us*

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I find it interesting that in the bible –the image that Jesus uses for His Church is that of Mother—*holy Mother the Church*

We are born into this world by our natural mom’s—we are born again into the Kingdom of God by our holy Mother the Church

 The baptismal font is the womb of holy Mother the Church

Jesus in today’s gospel sends the Apostles into the world so that people can be born again into His kingdom

He sends the Apostles so that people can be born again as children of the Lord---and children of His bride—the Church

*But that also makes us brothers and sisters to one another*---a huge part of Jesus plan of salvation has to do with us being family

 *With us loving each other*

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I have to tell you—these celebrations---both the Ascension of the Lord and Mother’s Day have a different meaning for me than they used

Since my mom and dad died---and of course I’ve had a lot of people now who I was close too who have passed away---and who I hope are in heaven*---or at least on their way to heaven.*

Many of the priests who taught me in the seminary are now gone---many of the priests that I’ve lived with are now gone---all the pastors I served under and others as well

In the past year I lost two very close friends---and other close friends over the years

And then I’ve celebrated the funerals of so many parishioners over the years—some I’ve known well---others who I didn’t know as well

But the fact is---*I’m constantly reminded that we’re only here to get out of here*

I know in the last few days I had the opportunity to visit my parents grave---and I’m going to be buried with them---*so whenever I go I see my name on the gravestone*---it’s a big reminder that I’m only passing through---I’m only here to get out of here

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And today we celebrate how Jesus ascended into heaven to prepare a place for us

 Our goal should be to be with Jesus [overriding desire of our lives]

100 years from now—none of us are going to be here---but we’re going to be somewhere [500 years---a 1,000 years—2,000 years….]

The years we have here are very brief---my close friends who died this year—one was 76 years old—the other was 70---in light of eternity –that’s nothing

So –our time here is very limited---the life that really matters is the life to come---the home that Jesus goes to prepare for us

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And of course—the home that Jesus prepares for us depends partly on the lives we lead

 The way we live our faith

The way we love in our lives [God Himself—our families—our friends and co-workers—the way we treat total strangers---*all impact the home Jesus is preparing for us*]

Faith and love is what this life is all about---if we choose not to live the faith---if we refuse to live lives of love---then we will likely not go to Jesus when our lives here end

So today’s feast is a strong reminder that our true home is in heaven [millions don’t know Jesus—it’s our job….commissioned at end of each Mass]

And today as a nation we honor the women *who first taught most of us how to love-*--our mom’s

Motherhood is such a noble role---*because to be a good mother you have to pour yourself out in love for your children*—for your whole family

Sadly we live in a time when many people don’t see motherhood as a noble role in society---but as a big burden that infringes on one’s self-fulfillment [Me Me Me]

We live in such a selfish pathetic time---*but despite that there are still so many women who do such a great job in living lives of love*---who pour themselves out for their children and families

On this Mother’s Day –let’s focus on those women who do so much to help the next generation know that they are loved—that they are treasured---that -their lives have meaning

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And let’s all contemplate how we are ourselves are living the life of love

Because the way we love in this world will have a huge impact on the home Jesus prepares for us

We’re only passing through—we have a very limited time here---let’s choose to live our faith—let’s choose to live lives of love---so that when we leave this world we will hear Jesus say, “Well done good and faithful servant---enter the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world---*enter the home I have prepared for you* [Let’s share so others can go to heaven as well]

That’s all I’ve got---Happy Mother’s Day to all the mom’s ---and happy feast of the Ascension to all of you