

**HOMILY**  
**THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD**  
**May 17, 2026**

We hear a lot about AI these days. I do not know a lot about AI but I have been thinking about how it may be changing one thing. Students today are using AI to write papers. If you think about getting the paper done as the goal, it does get the paper done, but you do not learn how to write in the process. I guess you could start with AI and then edit the paper to make it your own, but if you do not know how to write, you will not be a very good editor. You would need to fact check the paper to see if it includes misinformation. If you know how to do research you will be able to do this, but if you rely too heavily on AI you will not learn how to do research. I was in college in the olden days when you actually had to go to the library and look at books. I remember when I found a journal article I was looking for I found that the whole publication was on my topic. Looking at the articles I discovered I was taking the wrong approach on the paper. I also remember how much I learned by looking at articles that were not on my topic. In doing research, you learn a lot from the dead ends and from the mishaps. In writing a paper, the end product is what you turn in for the grade but all the learning takes place in doing the writing and the research. And sometimes something has value just because you did it. If you get a Hallmark card from someone you love with beautiful art work and verse that is really nice. If you get a card from a loved one that has a hand written note from the heart, that is priceless because they wrote it. That will probably be the saver.

In the first reading today the disciples ask Jesus if he is finally going to restore the kingdom of Israel. Up until this time Jesus has pretty much been doing all of the work and they have been observing and going along for the ride. With

the Ascension Jesus is making it clear that we must be his hands and feet in the world. He will be with us to love, support and guide us, but we have to do the work. That is the message that Jesus gives us today. We are to spread the Gospel to the ends of the earth. We are to try to establish heaven on earth. Jesus has the power to do that, but he has chosen not to. Sometimes we fall into the trap of just expecting Jesus to take care of everything for us. It is important that we do the work. He will help us, but we have to do the work. That is how we can live a life worth living in this world and how we will get to heaven.

If we read about Jesus, we can come to know him. We take the next step when we read the Gospels. We grow in faith when we move from knowing about Jesus to having a personal relationship with him through personal prayer. The more we grow our relationship with Jesus, the more we become like him. The more we become like Jesus the more we change the world. We grow in faith when we come to Mass. The growth continues when we receive the Eucharist, when we actively participate through prayer and singing. We grow further when you explain to someone else why we come to Mass every weekend. There is something about putting it into words that changes us. By becoming an active part of the community we begin to change the community for the better. When we hear about the random acts of kindness done by others, it can be inspiring. When we do the acts of kindness ourselves, we begin to change the world. It is only by doing the acts of kindness ourselves that we can increase our own sense of well being. Some activities have value just because we do them. What are we missing because we are letting AI do things for us?

So what is Jesus calling you to do to live a life worth living? What is Jesus calling you to do on your journey to heaven? What are the activities that have great value just because it is you who are doing them?