

Some people believe that in holding on and hanging in there is a sign of strength. But there are times when it takes more strength to let go.

That is what is happening in today's Gospel. Jesus is about to leave this earth. He is about to leave his closest companions.

They had walked with him, learned from him, witnessed his teaching and healings. Now they must go on without him. Understandably there must have been fear.

How could they go on? Where would they find the strength?

They are to be his witnesses to the ends of the earth, to make disciples, to teach and to baptize in his name.

Jesus assures them that they will not be alone. "Behold, I am with you always."

And soon they will be baptized with his Holy Spirit, that Spirit of wisdom and knowledge, strength and courage. He will be with them in a different way.

Along with fear there was sadness because letting go is hard.

All of us have had to let go. It is part of our life. We cannot hold on to our health, or things, or people or loved ones forever. Letting go is hard. It was hard for the disciples and it is hard for us.

I saw these quotations and found them to be so true.

To let go is to admit I am powerless,  
which means the outcome is not in my hands.

To let go is to admit that some things are out of my ability to repair.

To let go doesn't mean to stop caring,  
It means I can't do it for someone else.

To let go is not to care for, but to care about.

To let go is not to judge, but allow another to be human.

To let go is not to fix another, but to be an encourager.

To let go is not to adjust everything to my desires, but to  
Take each day as it comes and cherish the moments.

St. Paul wrote in the second reading today a beautiful prayer for all of us as we struggle to “let go.”

He prays that we may have a Spirit of Wisdom to see things from God’s perspective.

...that in times of “letting go” we may come to know Jesus more deeply.

...that the eyes of our hearts be enlightened to( know and) have hope

...that we may experience the strength of the Risen Christ.

The feast of the Ascension celebrates an ending of Jesus earthly mission but also a beginning.

The disciples are being prepared for their mission which will reach to the ends of the earth.

And the faith of the church has happened all because they let go of the way they would have wanted.

They could not stand there looking up at the sky, wishing things were different. They had to continue with their lives and begin something new, but strengthened with the abiding presence of Christ’s spirit.

We have that too. In all of our letting go, The Lord is with us.

Some people come into our lives and leave too soon. Some stay for a while and leave footprints on our hearts, and we are never the same.