

## POPE FRANCIS' GENERAL AUDIENCE: On Emmaus, the Road of Hope

Jesus is always beside us to give us hope, to warm our heart and say: 'Go on, I am with you. Go on'  
Rome, May 24, 2017; zenit.org

Dear Brothers and Sisters, good morning!

Today I would like to reflect on the experience of the two disciples of Emmaus, of which Luke's Gospel speaks (Cf. 24:13-35). Let us imagine the scene: two men are walking disappointed, sad, convinced of leaving behind them the bitterness of an event that ended badly. Before that Passover they were full of enthusiasm: convinced that those days would have been decisive for their expectations and for the hope of all the people. Jesus, to whom they had entrusted their life, seemed to have arrived finally to the decisive battle: now He would have manifested His power, after a long period of preparation and hiddenness. This is what they were expecting, and it was not so.

The two pilgrims nourished only a human hope, which was now shattered. That cross, raised on Calvary, was the most eloquent sign of a defeat, which they had not foreseen. If that Jesus was truly according to God's heart, they had to conclude that God was helpless, defenseless in the hands of the violent, incapable of opposing resistance to evil.

So, that Sunday morning, these two fled from Jerusalem. In their eyes they still had the events of the Passion, Jesus' death; and in their mind the painful vexation of those events, during the obligatory rest of the Sabbath. That Passover feast, which should intone the song of liberation, was transformed, instead, into the most painful day of their life. They left Jerusalem to go elsewhere, to a tranquil village. They had all the aspect of persons intent on removing a searing memory. So they are on the road, and walk, sad.

This scene – the road – was already important in the Gospel accounts; now it would become even more so, at the moment in which the history of the Church begins to be told.

Jesus' encounter with those two disciples seems to be altogether fortuitous: it is like the many crossroads that happen in life. The two disciples are walking deep in thought and someone unknown comes beside them. It is Jesus, but their eyes are unable to recognize Him. And then Jesus begins His "therapy of hope." What happens on this road is a therapy of hope. Who does it? Jesus.

First of all, He asks and listens: our God is not an invading God. Although He already knows the reason of the disappointment of those two, He gives them the time to be able to fathom the depth of the bitterness that has befallen them. A confession issues from it that is a refrain of human existence: "We had hoped but . . . We had hoped but . . ." (v. 21). How much sadness, how many defeats, how many failures there are in the life of every person! At bottom we are all somewhat like those two disciples. How many times in life we have hoped, how many times we have felt one step away from happiness, and then we have found ourselves disappointed on earth. But Jesus walks with all disheartened persons who walk with their head lowered. And, walking with them in a discreet way, He succeeds in giving them hope again.

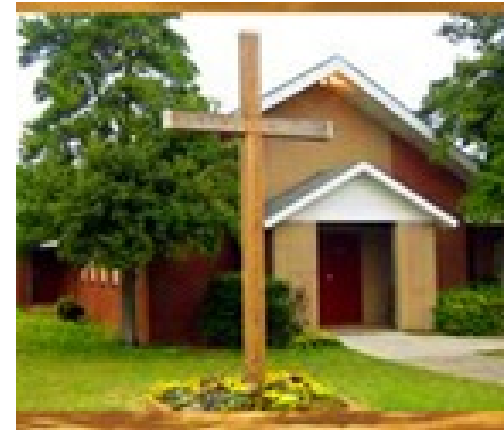
Jesus speaks to them first of all through *the Scriptures*. Whoever takes God's Book in hand will not come across stories of easy heroism, lightning campaigns of conquest. True hope is never at a low price: it always passes through defeats. The hope of someone who does not suffer, perhaps is not even such. God does not like to be loved as one would love a leader, who drags his people to victory annihilating his adversaries in blood. Our God is a faint light that burns on a cold and windy day, and although His presence in this world seems fragile, He has chosen the place that we all disdain.

Then Jesus repeats for the two disciples *the cardinal gesture of every Eucharist*: He took the bread, blessed it, broke it and gave it. Is not the whole story of Jesus in this series of gestures? And is there not, in every Eucharist, also the sign of what the Church should be? Jesus takes us, blesses us, "breaks" our life – because there is no love without sacrifice – and offers it to others, to all.

Jesus' encounter with the two disciples of Emmaus is fleeting, but in it is the whole destiny of the Church. It tells us that the Christian community is not shut-in in a fortified citadel, but walks in her most vital environment, namely the road. And there she encounters persons, with their hopes and their disappointments, sometimes heavy. The Church listens to everyone's story, as they emerge from the chest of the personal conscience, to then offer the Word of life, the witness of the love of God, faithful love to the end. And then persons' heart burns again with hope.

All of us have had difficult, dark moments in our life; moments in which we walked sad, deep in thought, without horizons, with only a wall before us. And Jesus is always beside us to give us hope, to warm our heart and say: "Go on, I am with you. Go on." The secret of the road that leads to Emmaus is all here: even through contrary appearances, we continue to be loved, and God will never stop loving us. God will always walk with us, always, also in the most painful moments, also in the most awful moments, also in moments of defeat: the Lord is there. And this is our hope. We go on with this hope! Because He is beside us and walks with us, always!

# St. Gerard Catholic Church



640 Edrie St. NE, Aiken, SC 29801  
803 649-3203

Fr. Emmanuel O. Andinam: Administrator  
Joseph A. Dennis: Deacon

## SUNDAY READINGS

### First Reading:

Acts 1:1-11(58A)

### Responsorial Psalm:

Psalm 47:2-3,6-7,8-9

### Second Reading:

Ephesians 1:17-23

### Gospel:

Matthew 28:16-20

### Lectionary Readings for Week of May 28, 2017

Monday: Acts 19:1-8;

John 16:29-33

Tuesday: Acts 20:17-27;

John 17:1-11a

Wednesday: Zephaniah 3:14-18a;

Luke 1:39-56

Thursday: Acts 22:30;23:6-11;

John 17:20-26

Friday: Acts 25:13b-21;

John 21:15-19

Saturday: Acts 28:16-20,30-31;

John 21:20-25

# The Ascension of The Lord May 28, 2017

## Mission Statement

*Called to be a People for Others*

## Vision Statement

*Anchored by faith hope and love in Jesus Christ,  
we strive to be active disciples, serving each  
other and all God's people by welcoming and  
embracing the enriching diversity of our community of faith.*

*Meanwhile the eleven disciples set out  
for Galilee, to the mountain where  
Jesus had arranged to meet them.  
When they saw him they fell down  
before him, though some hesitated  
Jesus came up and spoke to them. He  
said, 'All authority in heaven and on  
earth has been given to you, therefore,  
make disciples of all nations; baptize  
them in the name of the Father and of  
the Son and of the Holy and teach them  
to observe all the commands I gave  
you. And look, I am with you always;  
yes, to the end of time.'*

Matthew 28:16-20



**Mass Times:** Weekdays Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 8:15 AM,

First Friday Benediction after Mass

Weekend Saturday 4:00 PM, Sunday 7:00 AM and 11:00 AM

**Confessions:** after weekday Masses and by Appointment

**Office Hours:** 9:00 AM till 3:00 PM Tuesday - Thursday

**Bible Study:** Fridays 10:00 AM, **CCD:** No Class at this time

**RCIA:** Contact Deacon Joe 843 743-8779

**Baptisms, Confirmations, Marriages and Funerals:** By Appointment, Contact the office.

**Contact Us:** Phone 803 649-3203, **E-Mail** stgerardscatholi@atlanticbbn.net

**Facebook** @stgerardaiken, **Emergency number for Father** 803 341-5933



**Pray for our sick:**  
 Judy Riley  
 Marge Glauser  
 Leonard Saunders  
 Shirley Paige  
 William and Jackie Cobbs  
 Woody Alexander  
 Rosa Johnson  
 Brenda Lignons  
 Joe Fulmer

The word "repent" means to turn from sin, to change our actions. When it comes to change, do we take responsibility for change or do we think that others have to change instead? Change that is permanent comes from within, we must take control and disciplined. Remember though that we are not alone, Jesus is there to help lighten the load. Archbishop Carlson



**Pastoral Council:**  
 Marge Glauser,  
 Chairperson  
 Janet Menefee,  
 Vice Chair  
 Payson Borst

Jacqueline Brown  
 Fredrick Cadek  
 Joan Hesik  
 Gregory Wright  
 Patricia Hayes  
 Matt Fitzpatrick

**Finance Council:**  
 Robert Erikson,  
 Chairman  
 Leon Gagnon and  
 Anna Marie Key,  
 Auditors  
 Lisa Solenberger,  
 Secretary  
 Art Wagner

**Mass Intentions:**  
 4:00 PM Mass is said for Margaret & Howard Hadlock's 67<sup>th</sup> Memorial Anniversary from The Beckerts, 7:00 & 11:00 AM Mass are said for your own personal intentions.

*The Gathering Hymn 186 BB*  
*Hail the Day That Sees Him Rise*  
*The Offertory Hymn is 187 BB*  
*Go Make of All Disciples*  
*The Communion Hymn is CHOIR 713 BB*  
*Te Deum (Hymn of Praise)*  
*Our Song of Praise is 532 BB*  
*Let There Be Peace on Earth*



**Weekend Offering**  
**May 21, 2017**

Collection \$1,943.00  
 Needed \$2,612.00  
**Short \$669.00**

Attendance 139

*Stewardship a way of life*



Lector: Joan Hesik  
 E E Ministers: Ellen Heim



Lector: Diane Begic  
 E E Ministers: Pam Ziomek

Refreshments May 28  
 Jackie Cobb/Rosa Johnson

**Lay Ministers**

Saturday June 3	Sunday June 4
4:00 PM Vigil Mass	7:00 AM Mass
Lector: Joan Hesik	Mary Kay L'Esperance
E E Ministers: Ellen Heim	Gerard L'Esperance

Saturday June 10	Sunday June 11
4:00 PM Vigil Mass	7:00 AM Mass
Lector: Diane Begic	Denise Gelinas
E E Ministers: Pam Ziomek	Roger Gelinas

Sunday June 4
11:00 AM Mass
Lector: Cathy Ciani
E E Ministers: Wayman Johnson

Refreshments June 4	Refreshment June 11
Sheila Wagner/Matt Fitzpatrick	Shirley Paige/Anne Marie Key

The Legion of Mary is meeting at 1:30 on Fridays. Please consider joining. Call Paula Thurston at 803 226-1120

*Perpetual Novena in honor of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Tuesdays at the 8:15 Mass*



**Photo sessions for June 2, 3 & 4(for the new directory) have been canceled for the time being. We did not have a good number of people registering for photos. About 15%. We will attempt this venture later in the year. My apologies. Mike**

Parish Council Meeting June 13<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM

Finance Council Meeting June 13<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 PM

**Second Collection is for Catholic Communication Campaign**

**Planning has begun for the Saint Gerard annual Fall Festival.** Although it is scheduled for October, there is much work to be done. Our parish's health and growth are contingent on the success of the festival. There are many aspects of the event, all of which need volunteers and people to take the lead. Please consider participating or leading one of the following ways: Bake Sale, Youth Activities, Set Up, Clean Up, Food Service, Registration, Cash Handling, Vendor Coordinator, Signs, Artwork, as well as may more opportunities. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 13th at 6:00 PM at the parish. Contact the church office or Deacon Joe at [josephadennis@yahoo.com](mailto:josephadennis@yahoo.com) or 843-743-8779. We need your help, your time, and your talents in order to be a success.

**Volunteer Corner:**  
**Thanks to the people that have committed to help with the Fall Festival. The numbers are growing but we still need help.**

**Monday June 5<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM we are having a, get to know your church and its members, gathering. There will be light refreshments a brief film about St. Gerard Church's beginning and discussion with some of our founding members. This is presented by the members of the fledgling men's and woman's groups. Please plan to attend. A time to meet members from all Masses. Make St. Gerard one community**

Little Bethlehem Christians will be here this weekend. Selling Rosewood crafts from The Holy Land in support of Christians there. Please support them.

**Please join St. Mary Help of Christians in Aiken, SC for Stoke the Fire:**

**Rekindling Your Gift of the Holy Spirit**  
 May 27 \* May 31 \* June 3  
 Old St. Mary's on Park Ave.

3-Day Retreat on the Holy Spirit, featuring Fr. Dave Pivonka TOR and The Wild Goose series. The retreat is open to all ages and is intended to help you deepen your relationship with the Person of the Holy Spirit. Each day is independent from the others. There is no charge. Study guides and materials will be provided. Bring a friend!

Day 1: Saturday, May 27 - After morning Mass (approx. 9 a.m.)  
 Featuring: God's Love Poured Out  
 Short talk on the Gift of Fear

Day 2: Wednesday, May 31 - After evening Mass (approx. 6 p.m.)  
 Featuring: The Breath of God  
 Short talk on the Gift of Understanding

Day 3: Saturday, June 3 - After morning Mass (approx. 9 a.m.)  
 Featuring: Baptism in the Spirit and Fire  
 Short talk on the Fruits of the Holy Spirit

For more information contact Mary Ellen Jackson at [803.642.2676](tel:803.642.2676) or [mejackson@stmarys-aiken.org](mailto:mejackson@stmarys-aiken.org)

**Family Charitable Outreach:**  
 Contact Marge Glauser or the office.

The Knights of Columbus  
 Are asking you to help save local lives!  
 Sheppard Community Blood Center will conduct a Blood Drive  
 At Saint Mary Help of Christian Church  
 On Fairfield Street.

Saturday, June 3rd from 4:00 pm - 7:00 pm  
 Sunday, June 4th from 7:45 am 1:30 pm  
 Blood is the living fluid that all life is based on.  
 Give the gift that keeps on living.

Donate Blood.  
 Will you Choose 2 Give?  
 Every Donor is a Hero!  
 Each donor will receive a free T-Shirt and free Lipid Profile  
 After your 3rd donation in a calendar year. Bring a picture ID, Drivers license or donor card!  
 Donors should drink plenty of water prior to donating.  
 Thank you



**Rachel's Vineyard Retreats bring spiritual healing and strengthening of faith to individuals who have had or participated in an abortion. The retreat is a journey to healing, peace and reconciliation. July 7-9, 2017 in Charleston, SC For information and registration call Christy 803 554 6088 or Kathy 803 546 6010 or [grace4healing@gmail.com](mailto:grace4healing@gmail.com), [rachelvineyard.org](http://rachelvineyard.org)**

**Hospital Visits:** If you or a loved one is in Aiken Regional Hospital (ARMC) please let St Gerards know. Remember - ARMC does not inform us of Catholic patients, even if you register as a Catholic; it is up to the patient or family to do so. You can: ask the ARMC Chaplain to call the Catholic church, ask your nurse to inform the Catholic church (name & room number), call-St.Gerard at 649-3203 and leave a message or email St Gerard at: [stgerardscatholi@atlanticbbn.net](mailto:stgerardscatholi@atlanticbbn.net). You should follow this advice for Nursing homes and rehabilitation facilities also.

If you know of someone that needs The Blessed Sacrament brought to their home or hospital please call the office.

In Harms' Way: Please remember in your prayers our Nation and loved ones of our parishioners currently serving in harms' way: James Lignons and Robert McHugh. Lord, hold our troops in your loving hands. Protect them as they protect us. Bless them and their families for the selfless acts they perform for us in our time of need. I ask this in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Amen.