

Before he ascends gloriously into heaven, Jesus promises to empower the church through his own gift of the Holy Spirit.

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles [1:10-11]

In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. "This," he said, "is what you have heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

The Word of the Lord.

PSALM 93 *Said in unison*

1 The LORD is King;

he has put on splendid apparel; *

the LORD has put on his apparel

and girded himself with strength.

2 He has made the whole world so sure *

that it cannot be moved;

3 Ever since the world began, your throne has been established; *

you are from everlasting.

4 The waters have lifted up, O LORD,

the waters have lifted up their voice; *

the waters have lifted up their pounding waves.

5 Mightier than the sound of many waters,

mightier than the breakers of the sea, *

mightier is the LORD who dwells on high.

6 Your testimonies are very sure, *

and holiness adorns your house, O LORD,

for ever and for evermore.