

Homily for the Seventh Sunday of Easter

Servant Leadership in the Power of the Ascended Christ

By. Fr. Carlos

This week, the Church celebrates the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ into heaven. At first glance, the Ascension may seem like a departure, as though Jesus were leaving us behind. But the truth is exactly the opposite. The Ascension is not Christ abandoning his Church; it is Christ reigning for his Church.

In today's Gospel, Jesus lifted his eyes to heaven and prayed for his disciples: "Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one." (John 17:11)

Think about this wonderful truth: for two thousand years, Jesus Christ has been praying for his people. He prayed for the apostles. He prayed for the martyrs. He prayed for the saints. And he is praying for you and for me today.

The Ascended Lord is not absent. He is our heavenly High Priest, interceding for us at the right hand of the Father.

What kind of leaders does the Ascended Christ want us to be?

1. Leaders Who Humble Themselves

Saint Peter wrote: "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time." (1 Peter 5:6) The world teaches that leaders must dominate, control, and promote themselves. Many people climb to the top by stepping on others, but Jesus leads differently.

On the night before he died, he washed the feet of his disciples. I mean, the King of kings knelt before ordinary fishermen. The Lord of glory took the role of a servant. True Christian leadership is not about being above others; it is about bending down to serve them.

In our homes, this means parents sacrificing for their children. In marriage, this means spouses putting each other first. At work, this means encouraging your co-workers rather than competing selfishly. In the Church, this means serving quietly without seeking praise. The greatest leader in your family is not the one who speaks the loudest, but the one who loves the most.

2. Leaders Who Depend on the Holy Spirit

In the Book of Acts, Jesus told his disciples: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses." (Acts 1:8) The apostles were ordinary people. Peter had denied Jesus. Thomas had doubted. They were afraid and uncertain. But when the Holy Spirit came, they became bold witnesses who transformed the world.

Now, Christian leadership does not rely on personality, charisma, or human strength. It relies on the power of the Holy Spirit. A father who feels overwhelmed, a mother who feels exhausted, a spouse carrying heavy burdens, a worker facing injustice—all can lead faithfully because the Holy Spirit gives strength.

3. Leaders Who Remain Steady in Trials

Saint Peter also said: "Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you." (1 Peter 5:7) Now listen, every Christian leader will face trials. Parents will worry about their children. Couples will experience conflicts. Workers will endure stress. Christians will suffer opposition. But the Ascended Christ reigns above every difficulty.

He who ascended into heaven has conquered sin, death, and the devil. Therefore, we do not lead with fear. We lead with confidence. As Saint John Chrysostom wrote: "The storm is not strong enough to sink the ship of Christ." Because Jesus reigns, our hope is secure.

4. Leaders Who Build Unity

Jesus prayed: “That they may be one, as we are one.” (John 17:11) The purpose of Christian leadership is not personal success but unity. A Christian leader gathers rather than divides. He heals rather than wounds. He reconciles rather than fuels resentment. In a world marked by division, Christian leaders become instruments of peace.

A husband who apologizes first. A wife who forgives. A parent who listens patiently. A parishioner who serves joyfully. A friend who chooses mercy. These are the leaders who reflect Christ.

We have seen inspiring examples of Christian Leadership in recent times. Here are some modern examples of Christian Leadership

1. Pope Francis often reminded the Church that pastors must be “shepherds living with the smell of the sheep,” close to the people they serve.
2. During the COVID-19 pandemic, countless Christian doctors, nurses, priests, and volunteers put their lives on the line to care for the sick, feed the hungry, and comfort the dying.
3. Saint Teresa of Calcutta, though small in stature, became one of the most influential leaders in the world because she served the poorest of the poor.

The Martyrs as Our Greatest Leaders, The greatest leaders in Christian history were often martyrs.

They did not command armies. They did not possess wealth. They did not seek worldly power. They loved Jesus more than their own lives. The early Church grew because people saw Christians who were willing to die rather than deny Christ. Their leadership was rooted in sacrificial love. As Tertullian famously said: “The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.”

Leadership in Your Home

Dear friends, your first mission field is your own home. Your children are watching how you speak, pray, forgive, and love. Your spouse is watching whether you lead with patience and tenderness. Your neighbors are watching whether your faith is real. A Christian father leads by prayer and sacrifice. A Christian mother leads by perseverance and love. A Christian spouse leads by fidelity and forgiveness.

This leadership may go unnoticed by the world, but it is precious in the sight of God.

The Final Promise in the Collect for today prays: “Do not leave us comfortless, but send us your Holy Spirit to strengthen us.” That is exactly what Jesus has done. He ascended to heaven. He intercedes for us. He sends the Holy Spirit. He strengthens us. And one day, he will bring us to the place where he has gone before.

Brothers and sisters, let us reject the leadership style of this world—proud, harsh, and self-centered.

Instead, let us embrace the leadership of Christ:
humble, prayerful, Spirit-filled, courageous, and sacrificial.

Wherever God has placed you—in your home, your marriage, your workplace, or your church—you are called to lead as Jesus leads.

And after we have suffered for a little while, as Saint Peter promises,

“The God of all grace... will himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you.” (1 Peter 5:10)

The Ascended Christ reigns, He prays for you, He sends the Holy Spirit, and He will bring you safely home.

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.