

Acts 1:6-14ⁱ

So when the apostles had come together, they asked Jesus, "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." Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

ⁱAbout the First Reading: Acts 1:6-14

In today's reading from the book of Acts, Luke emphasizes the reality of the resurrection and the validity of the apostles as witnesses. The apostles are to await the Holy Spirit. The apostles ask if the kingdom is now to be restored, for the promise of the Spirit implies that the last days are imminent. Jesus discourages such speculation and redirects their attention to the plan of God now being unfolded. A new era of sacred history is beginning. The world is to be evangelized from Jerusalem. Verse 8 is virtually a table of contents for Acts: Jerusalem, chapters 1-7, Judea and Samaria, chapters. 8-9, the Roman empire, chapters 10-28.

The apostles return to Jerusalem where Luke describes the expectant assembly: the eleven,

the women who had attended Jesus, and his family. They devote themselves to prayer, always the context of great events in Luke, here particularly a prayer of expectation of the Spirit.