

"Local Boy Makes Good"

You can picture the headlines in The Galilee Gazette and The Nazareth News. They'd be splashed on the front pages after Jesus drew huge crowds ,teaching at the lakeside, or caused a sensation with some miracle. Then there would be the less flattering headlines when he told a few home truths to some religious high-ups.

After the Resurrection and Ascension there were probably no big headlines , but for his disciples it was huge. Maybe people like James and John secretly did feel "Wow! Our friend the master really is great and has indeed made good ." Yet they were surely beginning to realise that this whole thing was far bigger than they could really grasp. During the last few weeks they had come to see even more in Jesus than before ,when he was with them day by day .They'd become confident he was really alive and all was well ,even though he would come to them, then go away, then come again. They had taken to heart his customary greeting , " Peace be with you." Their trust in him had deepened. Jesus surely knew they were ready for his departure.

Our Ascension readings and hymns keep using words which tell of Jesus going up, enthroned above, dwelling on high, although we know it's not literally up there above the bright blue sky. Yet it's hard not to use those words and images , in fact we can't help using that language. That's fine, as long as we know it's just human attempts to grapple with the wonder of God, who is beyond description, beyond our imagining. If we think we've captured him in words we're just wrong aren't we . Music, art and so on together with words point us in the direction of the divine glory of Christ , who reigns with the Father and the Spirit.

Often the beauty of nature or the goodness of people can draw us towards God , but worship is surely where we are especially met by him, as together we wait on him and open ourselves to him. When Jesus departed from their sight his friends did just that; they worshipped him and went back to Jerusalem , trusting his promise and full of joy and praise. May we be the same !