Father’s reflection:

Today we are celebrating Christ going home to Heaven – his Ascension. His mission on earth is accomplished. The angels are cheering at his return. The souls that were waiting for many years, since the beginning of human history, for Jesus to come and re-open the way to Heaven are celebrating too from their new and eternal home.

We are also thanking Jesus for the first thing that he did and now continues to do, as soon as he got back to Heaven. Jesus has taken his place at the Father’s right hand, asking him to help us get to Heaven too, and everyone we love. As Jesus promised at the Last Supper, he and the Father are sending the Holy Spirit to help us get home by bringing us grace. Christ has ascended and now the disciples are waiting for the “whoosh” of the Holy Spirit.

In today’s First Reading, the disciples are still confused and have doubts, even though they have seen that Jesus has risen from the dead. They were expecting, like all of Israel expected, one big whoosh right away: they thought the Kingdom of Heaven was coming right now. Jesus is telling them to hold on to and be ready for the whoosh.

In today’s Second Reading St. Paul prays that we too receive this “whoosh” of the Holy Spirit when Christ arrives home. This “whoosh” will bestow on us wisdom and revelation, not just on the level of knowledge, but in our hearts as well. Paul describes well where Our Lord takes his place at the Father’s right hand. Where he will be put in charge of all things and be above all other powers. Where he will also be given us, the Church, to watch over and guide.

In today’s Gospel, Our Lord prepares the disciples, and us, for Pentecost. He may be ascending soon, but the Holy Spirit is coming in force. In the Gospel today, and for the rest of this week, we are waiting for that first big whoosh of the Holy Spirit that came to the Church on Pentecost, which is what we will celebrate on Pentecost Sunday. Jesus tells the Apostles to go out and baptize the whole world. When Jesus was baptized, the Holy Spirit whooshed down on him. Whenever we receive the sacraments, whenever we pray, and whenever we love each other the same thing happens to us. The Holy Spirit also fulfills the promise Jesus made in the Gospel today. By the power of the Holy Spirit, the bread and wine will become the Eucharist – the Body and Blood of Christ. Jesus will stay with us in the Eucharist “until the end of the age” when he will return with the last big whoosh that will bring us all home to Heaven.