

*We Respond*

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**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON** (or a hymn) Men of Galilee, why gaze in wonder at the heavens? This Jesus whom you saw ascending into heaven will return as you saw him go, alleluia.

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM** (Ps 46)

**ANTIPHON:** God mounts his throne to shouts of joy: a blare of trumpets for the Lord.

**RESPONSE:** God mounts his throne to shouts of joy: a blare of trumpets for the Lord.

**LECTOR:** All peoples, clap your hands, cry to God with shouts of joy! For the Lord, the Most High, we must fear, great king over all the earth. **R.**

**LECTOR:** God goes up with shouts of joy; the Lord goes up with trumpet blast. Sing praise for God, sing praise, sing praise to our king, sing praise. **R.**

**LECTOR:** God is king of all the earth. Sing praise with all your skill. God is king over the nations; God reigns on his holy throne. **R.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** Alleluia, alleluia! Go and teach all people my gospel. I am with you always, until the end of the world. Alleluia!

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON** (or a hymn) Behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age, alleluia.

**TODAY'S READINGS** Acts 1:1-11; Ephesians 1:17-23; Matthew 28:16-20

**NEXT WEEK** (Pentecost Sunday, Year A) Acts 2:1-11; Ps 103; 1 Cor 12:3-7, 12-13; John 20:19-23

*Brighten up  
your day with  
The Majellan*

**National Sorry Day** is held on 26 May each year to acknowledge and recognise members of the Stolen Generations. National Reconciliation Week 2020 will be held from 27 May – 3 June.

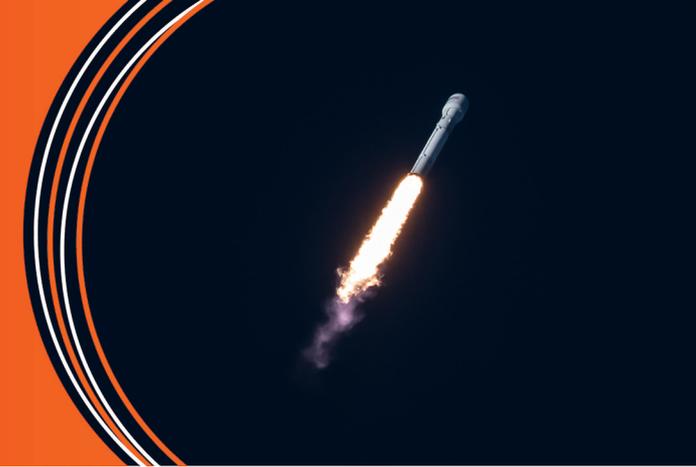
Bread 4 Today provides free access to daily prayers for reflection and meditation. All prayers can be shared via social media with a tap of the screen. B4T is available from the Apple App Store or Google Play.

For further spiritual nourishment go to [majellan.media](http://majellan.media)



# majellan

## *The space between science and religion*



24 May 2020 Ascension Year A

Soviet cosmonaut, Yuri Gagarin, was the first man to rocket into space. In 1961 when he returned to earth he said: "I went up into space but I saw no angels and did not meet God." Gherman Titov, whose mission followed Gagarin's a few months later, gave speeches to large crowds at the 1962 World's Fair in Seattle that included a similar sentiment.

It is a recurring theme in Western pop culture to oppose science and religion: science gives us concrete, indisputable knowledge, whereas religion gives us stories and dreams. Jesus's miracles, his resurrection from the dead and his ascension: these contradict what science knows about the world. Such beliefs are therefore impossible; they are pie in the sky.

The world is a closed, coherent system of physical cause and effect; there is no place for God, for spiritual beings; no heaven or hell; no goodness or evil beyond or above the human mind. There is only the world that science studies, the physical world that can be measured and accurately predicted, the world that can be harnessed for human-specific ends.

Such is the story that scientism, an ideology, tells itself and anyone else who will listen. (Science in itself tells no story at all; it only uses specific methods to make observations and draws conclusions based

on specific assumptions.) Scientism is based on a myth. In fact, any ultimate explanation of reality, good or bad, weak or strong, profound (like religion) or unsophisticated (like scientism), demands an organising story-intelligence. We always require "myth" to give a frame and a context that allows us to organise our kinds of knowledge, like science.

The Ascension: Jesus "was lifted up, and a cloud hid him from their sight." Was Jesus the first spaceman, riding his invisible rocket up into the sky? If so, he would have fallen back down. And if he could have lived to tell, he would have said, like the Soviet cosmonauts, that he did not see God up there above the clouds. Or rather, was the cloud that hid him the "cloud of glory" that enshrouds the unapproachable Almighty God?

Was the heaven he entered the heaven that the physical sky above symbolises, reflects, points to, makes manifest? I, for one, do not doubt that on that day, Jesus, risen from the dead, ascended physically into the sky before the eyes of his astounded followers. Science cannot tell me if the Ascension is true or false. The Ascension, however, gives science all the room it requires to do its work. So which approach to reality? Scientism or religion, is the more sophisticated, more in touch with the way things really are?

**W Chris Hackett**  
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