



Father Danny Murphy is a retired Pastor from Brooklyn NY. A gifted man with a God given talent to inspire and God's gift to us at Holy Cross Church in Vero Beach Florida. This is just one of his inspirational homilies.

Fr. Danny Murphy – Ascension Sunday 2017

"I will be with you always, until the end of the age." That's the sentence from our Gospel that we'll reflect upon this morning. Jesus tells us that, "I am with you always, until the end of the age." We'll start with a true but sad story. Some years ago a woman came to me, all upset, very upset because her mother had died and no one had called a priest to anoint her mother before she had died. This woman was sobbing, wracked with grief saying, "Now my mother won't go to heaven because she wasn't anointed!" Well that poor woman must have forgotten what Jesus tells us this morning, "I am with you always, until the end of the age." We are going to heaven, not because we are anointed, but because we are loved! "I am with you always, until the end of the age." Now let's take a look at some evidence that Jesus has kept his Ascension Day promise: "I am with you always, until the end of the age." Have you ever asked yourself...now this is my line of work so maybe I ask myself this more than you, BUT... have you ever asked yourself how in heaven's name has our Church survived for over 2,000 years? Survived persecution, heretics, wars, survived some embarrassing popes, survived internal corruption, scandal, mismanagement and so much more. Our church today is a reflection of what used to be an overwhelming Catholic world. Our Church is dwindling in what was once predominantly Catholic South America, and in our own country only about twenty-five percent of all Catholics come to church regularly. How in heaven's name has our Church survived? The only reason why our church has survived, is

because Jesus assures us, "I am with you always, I am with you always." Now for some good news evidence that Jesus has kept his Ascension Day promise of "I am with you always." Although our Church is dwindling in the Northern Hemisphere, it is flourishing in part of the Southern Hemisphere. In 1920 there were approximately 1.9 million Catholics in Africa. By the year 2000 that had grown to 130 million Catholics – a growth rate of over 6000%! And it is still growing in places like Africa. And, in my own lifetime, I've seen evidence that Jesus is always with us. In my lifetime, Maximilian Kolbe stepped forward amidst the madness of the Nazis and became a martyr. In my lifetime, Thomas Merton emerged from Greenwich Village and became a mystic. In my life time, Jackie Robinson, Rosa Parks, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. extolled for us desegregation. In my lifetime, Dorothy Day, Mother Theresa and so many more said yes to serving the poor, and on and on it goes! The Church has always arisen from the ashes and all because Jesus is always with us. And what is true communally is also true personally. Jesus is always with me. Jesus is always with you. Now I'm going to give you a guarantee! I'm going to guarantee that if from Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day weekend, if you say to yourself, "Jesus is always with me," you will have a happy summer! You can't lose! So, whether it be when you first wake up in the morning, or whether it be before you go to bed at night, at dinner time, just say to yourself everyday: Jesus is with me. "I am with you always until the end of the age."