

10:30 a.m. Sermon for Seventh Sunday of Easter  
May 17, 2026  
The Rev. Canon Raymond Raney  
Trinity on the Hill Episcopal Church  
Los Alamos, New Mexico

Acts 1:6-14  
Psalm 68:1-10, 33-36  
1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11  
John 17:1-11

O God, the King of glory, you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven: Do not leave us comfortless, but send us your Holy Spirit to strengthen us, and exalt us to that place where our Savior Christ has gone before; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

This past Thursday was the Feast of the Ascension.  
Next Sunday is the Feast of Pentecost.  
This is the Seventh and final Sunday of Eastertide.  
And to crown the day, we celebrate our graduates.

All these events coincide in this completion of what was and what is  
and what is to come.  
This is the culmination of the incarnation of the divine  
into the humanity who is Jesus the Christ.

Christina Rosetti wrote of the gift of the incarnate Word of God.

Love came down at Christmas,  
Love all lovely, Love Divine,  
Love was born at Christmas,  
Star and Angels gave the sign.  
Worship we the Godhead,  
Love Incarnate, Love Divine,  
Worship we our Jesus,  
But wherewith for sacred sign?  
Love shall be our token,  
Love be yours and love be mine,  
Love to God and all men,  
Love for plea and gift and sign.

Between the birth and the ascension,  
Jesus lived a life of witness to the power of love.

What we see today is the space between Christ's departure at the Ascension and the arrival of the Holy Spirit at the Pentecost.

This is our doorway to the divine.

The term I learned in seminary called this a "liminal" space, a threshold between where we were and where we will be.

Richard Rohr describes liminal space:

"It is when you have left the tried and true, but have not yet been able to replace it with anything else.

It is when you are between your old comfort zone and any possible new answer.

Graduation is a liminal space— stepping onto a threshold of a door that has yet to be opened.

What is coming next?

It can be an anxious time with all the uncertainties of the world today.

As Rohr wrote: If one is not "trained in how to hold anxiety, how to live with ambiguity, how to entrust and wait, you will run ... anything to flee this terrible cloud of unknowing."

That's where the disciples found themselves as they watched their rabbi ascend into the clouds.

And from that great height, What's next?

When I was a kid, I was deathly afraid of heights.

Even a step ladder scared me into panic.

I remember one time my family visited New York City, and on top of the Empire State Building:

I looked over the edge,

and fell to my hands and knees and crawled to the elevator.

Given my fear of heights, it may seem strange then

that I tell you that my father was a pilot,

and I would fly with him — unafraid.

When I was 10 he took us to Texas while he learned to fly helicopters.

In those days the doors were taken off,

and the passengers would be open to the air.

I flew with him, and was not afraid.

The difference was that I trusted — absolutely trusted — my father.

I knew he would never do anything to put me in danger.

I knew that when I was with him, I was safe.

He would look after me — no matter what.

Why the difference in my fears I don't know,

but I like to think that it must have been something like that with Jesus. From his birth, his growing up, his ministry, his betrayal, his trial, his crucifixion, the resurrection, and the ascension: Jesus trusted in his father – absolutely, completely, ultimately.

That is the trust I would commend to the graduates today. We celebrate with them because they are the future. They enter into lives that they have not experienced until now. From here on they are responsible for themselves. They will be making decisions that will affect others, and, ultimately, perhaps, decisions that will impact the whole human race. We already are in their debt.

And they are in the debt of their God and Father, and I commend them to remember that God will take care of them: no matter what.

During my time as interim priest, the Vestry adopted a prayer to guide them during those times. It was written nearly 450 years ago by Sir Francis Drake as he prepared to set sail for the New World. He penned a prayer to challenge himself and his crew, and the rest of us, to dare more than we often are prepared to dare.

### **Drake's Prayer**

Disturb us, Lord,  
When We are too pleased with ourselves,  
When our dreams have come true  
Because we dreamed too little,  
When we arrived safely  
Because we sailed too close to the shore.

Disturb us, Lord,  
when with the abundance of things we possess  
We have lost our thirst  
For the waters of life;  
Having fallen in love with life,  
We have ceased to dream of eternity  
And in our efforts to build a new earth,  
We have allowed our vision  
Of the new Heaven to dim.

Disturb us, Lord,  
to dare more boldly,  
To venture on wilder seas

Where storms will show Your mastery;  
Where losing sight of land,  
We shall find the stars.

We ask you to push back  
The horizons of our hopes;  
And to push back the future  
In strength, courage, hope, and love.

This we ask in the name of our Captain,  
Who is Jesus Christ.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ challenges us to live our lives  
in caring for one another as we work together  
to build a future that has yet to be written.

Amen.