

Homily For Ascension 2018 – May 13, 2018

Imagine you are in an art museum. And you are walking down the hallway....and as you do you see there are pictures of one man. And that man is Jesus Christ.

And all the pictures of Jesusas a child in a crib at Christmas.....on a cross at Calvary....and the Resurrection on Easter morning. Now the picture I want you to focus on is the Ascension of Jesus.

Of course the Ascension does not mean that Jesus literally took an elevator to heaven....or a rocket from Cape Canaveral. The bible uses poetic language to paint a truth. We do it all the time in our culture.

The white house said today.....does not mean literally a house that can speak....when we say heaven is up there, we do not mean literally physically above the earth.

Today's ascension feast is not about Jesus somehow being in a different place but in a different dimension. the dimension reserved for him in heaven. And this is why today's feast is part of the Easter season.

In fact the six week Easter season has three main parts; Jesus resurrection.....sending of Holy Spirit at Pentecost which we will; celebrate next Sunday...and today the Ascension.

Okay but fasten your seat belts. You see today's feast is also about us. Jesus in the ascension to the right hands of the Father, took with him.....our human nature.

Remember Jesus was also 100% human as well as 100% divine. And today brings an end all that the God-man could do with this human nature. He walked the earth, taught, healed, suffered and died.

There remained one more thing: to take this human nature of ours into the very presence of God.

Think about it: all the things you cannot stand about yourself...your faults and failings...your sins and sufferings....all of that is now in the very presence of God.

You and I must be more important than we thought. We must be of more permanent value than we ever imagined. We must be of more substance than we ever dreamt.

Imagine the Ascension this way: the most conceited, proud person promoting his own worth.....is timid compared to the value that God puts on him.

In a way....thanks to the Ascension... all of Christianity can be reduced to this one statement: God's value of you surpasses the grossest most proud thought you could ever have of yourself.

And so Jesus returns to the Father with everything that is ours. And so makes it possible to share God's own life.

That is why nothing you will ever achieve....nothing you will ever accomplish, will equal the gift of the sacred mystery that is now present in you.....

Thanks to the Ascension. Nothing can ever increase the worth and dignity you have in God's eyes. But to allow such mysteries to sink in we need to pray in silence. For what air is to the body...prayer is to the spirit. What are the chances you will pray about the ascension for ten minutes. Okay what about five minutes. Let's all quietly pray about the ascension for the next minute.