

Reflections

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83 – May 15, 2010

Towards Our Own Ascension

How is Christ with us on earth?

Christ is present. Christ is here with us on earth and will never abandon us. He is present in the sacraments, and especially so in the Eucharist. He is present in the Christian community. He is present in our heart which is a temple of Christ and the Triune God.

The Ascension of the Lord wants to reveal to us something more than His invisible presence among us. It reveals to us how we and our earthly life will end. I think this is a question which is unsettling for all of us, and the feast of the Ascension of the Lord gives us an answer: our final end will be an ascension.

Someday we will meet in Heaven just as we are now gathered on earth. Our presence at each Sunday Mass does nothing more than prefigure, announce and prepare that grand final assembly with the Lord. At the end of Mass, we are dispersed; but it is something only transitory until the final hour of our ascension.

Everything is transitory: joys, sadness, goods..... Because everything that happens here below on this earth is transitory. How often are we discouraged by whatever obstacle, whatever suffering and cross, saying: *it is not possible that God exists and permits these things; it is not possible that God directs our life and that He transforms it in this way.* Yes, it is true that things are not always easy, but let us hope, let us have patience, let us not judge until we have seen the end because we already know by experience that after the Passion and Calvary always comes the Resurrection and the Ascension.

Therefore, **all sadness is transitory.** We are unfortunate, but only for a brief time. Why did I pray and why did God not hear me? Because God reserves the right to give me many things and much better things than those which I dared to ask for. Why am I still sick, with no strength? Because I will soon be healed forever. Why do I have to lament the death of a dear one? Or, why does life have to separate me from the only ones with whom I enjoy living? Because soon I will find myself reunited forever.

Also joy, **all joy of this world is a passing thing.** The children know that they cannot always have their parents with them. The parents also know that they will not take care of their little ones forever. And it is the same for a wife for her husband, a husband for his wife, and it is the same for all persons who love each other. Only one definite place exists where we will gather forever and this place is not here below on this earth.

The same is with **our goods.** We cannot take them with us: we will lose all of them. Someday our hands will open up to surrender them all. Today, we are still in time to open our hands and offer everything freely because everything which we do not offer to God we are going to lose.

To take the world to God. At all Masses we offer some bread, some wine – representing us, our lives, our work, our goods, and the priest will take all of this and then consecrate it, taking it to God's world.

- Thus in each one of our Masses, a bit of our world passes to form a part of the other world.
- At each Mass, the ascension of a little bit of earth to Heaven takes place
- At each Mass, we Christians are invited to elevate ourselves, to separate ourselves a little bit from earth and to take a step towards God's world.

Questions for reflection

1. Have I thought about my own ascension?
2. What would be hard for me to give up today: my goods.....?
3. Do I live as if I would never leave this world?

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