

THE BULLETIN

“So the faith was planted: so it must be restored.”

Eight Pond Place, Oyster Bay, NY 11771

May 2023

“I will take you to Myself...”

Adapted from a sermon by The Most Rev. Clarence Kelly
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During this month of May, we celebrate and contemplate the last act of Our Divine Savior upon this earth, namely, His physical departure from it. This is the termination of that great work which He came to accomplish, our Redemption and sanctification. And now, “He Who maketh the outgoings of the morning and of the evening to be joyful, ascends on high, leading captivity captive, and distributes gifts to men.” (Ps. 68:18) It would seem, at first sight, that Our Lord's Ascension is anything but a joyous event. We would think that all the earth should be sorrowful; for it has lost what makes the whole universe joyful, the presence of God made manifest in the flesh. Take away the sun and what would this world become? A chaos of gloom and darkness. But what is this material sun compared with the glorious Sun of Justice, Who enlightens every man that cometh into the world; and what is the darkness of a world, deprived of the sun's light, compared with spiritual darkness that is not illumined by Him Who is the Light and Life of Men? (Job, 8:12)

But is it so? Did the world indeed lose its Creator, its Redeemer, its Sanctifier when it beheld Him ascending into heaven? when the clouds received Him out of its sight? Far from it. The Feast of the Ascension is, for all of us, a feast of joy and exultation, and we are able to rejoice in the triumph of Our Lord, without bewailing our own loss. The Apostles, indeed, before they were fully enlightened, received this news with sorrow, and Our Lord was obliged to comfort them. “And now I go to Him that sent Me,” said Our Lord, “and none of you asketh Me: ‘wither goes Thou?’ but

because I have spoken these things to you, sorrow hath filled your heart.... If I go not, the Paraclete will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.” (John 16:5-7) Therefore, when the actual moment of separation came, we read in the Gospel of St. Luke that the Apostles went back to Jerusalem with great joy. So too, we, after straining our eyes to behold the vanishing Form of Our Divine Savior ascending into heaven, should return from the celebration of this feast with our hearts overflowing with joy.

The first reason for our joy is contained in the words of Our Lord that it is “expedient for us,” that He should go in order that He might send us the Paraclete. The *Paraclete*, the Holy Ghost, the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, is known by this name because He is the Counselor and Consoler of the Church. In the inscrutable ways of Divine Providence, it was the delight of the all-good God to be with the children of men. So great was this delight that it was decreed, not only that the eternal Son should be begotten in time and become incarnate with our nature, but that the eternal Holy Ghost, Who proceeds from the Father and the Son, should also have a special mission in the world—that He would be sent by the Father and the Son, not to take our flesh, but rather to bring life to the mystical Body of Christ, which is the Church. By His perpetual indwelling, the Holy Ghost preserves the members of the Church in the unity of faith and the communion of mutual charity, for the Holy Ghost is the Fruit of the love between the Father and the Son. He is the living Substance of the love which unites the Three Divine