



My Dear Parishioners,

Praised be Jesus Christ! Wednesday and Thursday of this week mark historic days for our Parish Community and Church at large. Wednesday is the 1st Anniversary of Fr. Sharrett's Death. It is also the 1st Anniversary of the Groundbreaking for our new Narthex. To honor both events, there WILL BE a 7:30AM Mass on Wednesday in Church for Fr. Sharrett, followed by coffee/donuts in the St. Joseph Room. We will share stories about the past year and memories of Fr. Sharrett. ALL ARE WELCOME.

Thursday is the 40th Day of Easter, Ascension Thursday, a Holy Day of Obligation. Mass Schedule is posted and I share here an article out of BUSTED HALO highlighting this beautiful yet overlooked Mystery of our Faith.

Next Sunday, we welcome the Little Sisters of the Poor from Newark, DE. The Little Sisters care for the elderly poor and run the Jeanne Jugan Residence on Salem Church Road in Newark along with many such centers throughout the world. They will be here looking for some support and giving us the joy-filled support of their Christian Witness. Please remember them next week.

Finally, as of this writing, Deacon Augustine will be with us next week as well. His Ordination to the priesthood is slated for May 25 in Lincoln, Nebraska. We thank Augustine for his witness to us and pray every blessing for him in this most special time of his life.

Enjoy the week! Peace, Fr. Rogers

A Grand Entrance: What the Ascension Is Really About **BY HUNTER LEONARD**

Between the glory of the Resurrection and the fire of [Pentecost](#) is an often-overlooked event in the life of Christ and the Church. Forty days after Easter, the Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Ascension, where we [read](#) of Christ's bodily ascent into heavenly glory.

Growing up, I never really grasped the importance of the Ascension. It almost seemed like a grand exit with no purpose. This concluding moment in Christ's life was always mentioned but never explained. As I started studying my Catholic faith more in college and began to read and pray on this topic, I discovered my view of the Ascension as a grand exit was far from the truth. Here are four points that help us better understand and experience the significance and beauty of this special day.

The difference between Ascension and Assumption: First, it's helpful to be clear about our terms. As Catholics, we use two different words when speaking of the events in which Jesus and Mary enter heaven, and very often people get these terms mixed up and confused. We speak of Christ's [Ascension](#) and his mother's [Assumption](#). The reason for the distinction is because Jesus ascended into heaven by his own power, for he is God in the flesh, whereas Mary is assumed into heaven by the power of God. Both Jesus and his mother enter heaven by God's power, but Jesus is himself the power of God ([1 Cor 1:24](#)).

Where did Jesus ascend to? St. Luke tells us that "He was lifted up, and a cloud took him from their sight" ([Acts 1:9](#)) At first glance, it might seem strange — Jesus rising higher and higher into the sky. Did Jesus ascend into outer space? Where did his body go? Luke's wording is specific in saying that a cloud took Jesus from the sight of his followers. Throughout Scripture, the cloud is the symbol of God's presence. For example, God's dwelling in the tabernacle was symbolized by the presence of the cloud ([Ex 40:34](#)), and at the Transfiguration, a cloud overshadowed Jesus and his disciples, as God spoke to them ([Lk 9:34-35](#)). By saying that Jesus was taken up into a cloud, Luke is explaining that Jesus is entering into the divine presence. I was shocked when I first heard this; it made total sense. Jesus ascends, with his body, into the presence of God in heaven.

Entry of humanity into divine glory: For me, one of the most beautiful points to reflect on is that the Ascension commemorates the entrance of humanity into heavenly glory. Just as we emphasize that Jesus rose bodily from the grave, we insist that Jesus ascended bodily into heaven. I used to think of it this way: Jesus comes down to Earth at Christmas and returns to heaven at the Ascension. But the Ascension is not the undoing of the Incarnation, it is the solidifying of the Incarnation for eternity. God has a human body forever. At the Incarnation, God enters into our humanity. At the Ascension, He raises humanity up to his divinity. The early Church said it like this, the Son of God became a son of man so that sons of men might become sons of God ([cf. 2 Cor 8:9](#)). I always love to ponder how the angels reacted when seeing Jesus in his glorified body entering heaven. The shock of the Incarnation is seeing God on earth, the shock of the Ascension is seeing man in heaven.

The Ascension and Christ's priesthood: The effect of Christ's Ascension into heaven continues to this day and is related to Christ's role as the new high priest. In the Old Testament, the high priest would enter the presence of God in the Temple to intercede for the people of Israel ([Lev 16](#)). Christ, our new high priest, enters the heavenly sanctuary, the true dwelling place of God, where he "always lives to make intercession" for all his people ([Hb 7:25; 9:24](#)). St. Thomas Aquinas [wrote](#), "The very showing of himself in the human nature which he took with him to heaven is a pleading for us." Jesus Christ, our true high priest, entered the heavenly sanctuary so that we might one day enter, too. I love to reflect on his promise, "And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also" ([Jn 14:3](#)).

I was wrong to think of the Ascension as a grand exit, it is in fact a grand entrance, the entrance of humanity into divine glory. Today, we are raised up to heaven by Jesus Christ, the power of God. His Ascension is the promise of our own bodily entrance into heavenly glory.