



FEAST OF THE ASCENSION

LITURGY BYTES *by Michele Hall*



For us in our Diocese, this feast continues to be celebrated on a Thursday, thus the name Ascension Thursday. This year it occurs on May 14th. As Catholics, we know this feast commemorates Jesus' ascension into Heaven. Historically, it is celebrated 40 days after Easter and is considered a holy day of obligation.

The importance of this feast is to realize even though Jesus left the earth, He remains present to His Church. He sends the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles at Pentecost and naturally on us through Baptism and Confirmation.

We read in the Acts of the Apostles that Jesus was "taken up." It places an emphasis that it was an action of God. A mystery for sure, but also we see that the disciples were filled with joy because of His death and resurrection that enabled the gates of heaven to be opened. We are fortified by Jesus's promise: "And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age." Even though the disciples' faithfulness failed at times, God's faithfulness towards us never fails. This is why God is always communicating His presence with us in various ways to all cultures and in various circumstances.

Jesus commissions His disciples to baptize in His name, reminding them that He is always present through the Holy Spirit. The message is clear for us, His witnesses, to live in a way worthy of the call we have received.

Have a blessed, happy and healthy week ahead!