

# A Reflection from Fr. Canisius for The Ascension of the Lord

Dear Parishioners,

So, what is the real significance of the Ascension, and what difference does it make to the overall Gospel message and what we believe about Jesus as being fully God and fully human? Each week we proclaim in the creed that Jesus ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. From this we then make the most spectacular of assertions that, having ascended to glory, Jesus will return to judge all humanity.

As Christians we believe that the Ascension is more than just a tidy conclusion to Jesus' earthly life and ministry. It is an event that has ramifications for all humanity: that Christ, having defeated death, will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and to establish his eternal kingdom of light. The Ascension is, therefore, the culmination of the great mystery of salvation that began with the Annunciation, when the Word became flesh and took to himself our human existence.

Even in this departure, Jesus promises to be with his disciples through the ages; he will not abandon them or us, but through the mystery of the Ascension, he who once lived on earth is now present to every generation and age. In many ways, without this key piece of the Christian story, Christianity would be nothing more than a religion of memories. We would simply be recalling and celebrating past events, but they would have no real and lasting impact on our lives. From this great moment on, all humanity has a place in the eternal life of God. For now, one like us has ascended and taken his place at the right hand of the Father.

As we celebrate this great feast of our faith, let us hear with refreshed hearts the promise of Christ to be with us always and to send his Spirit upon each of us, that we might be enlightened in faith and faithful in all ways to our new identity in Christ. Let us pray that as we go forth from this celebration we might be filled with the hope of eternal life in God, a hope founded in the person of Christ who is both God and man.

I hope you can come to the **end-of-life pre-planning presentation** scheduled for Monday May 22, 2023, at 7:00 pm in the church. See you also at our **cultural heritage celebration on Pentecost Sunday at 11:00 am Mass**. I encourage you to join and participate in the celebrations.

Have a blessed week!

*Fr. Canisius*