

From the Pastor's Office

The Ascension of the Lord

To put it simply, the Ascension of the Lord commemorates the day when Jesus said goodbye to His earthly existence. He was leaving us to dwell in His Heavenly home. He promised that He would be with us always. I think of all the goodbyes. Shakespeare says in *Romeo and Juliet*, “parting is such sweet sorrow.” We have all experienced this. We hate goodbyes. Goodbye is such a final response that we prefer to say things like, “see you soon.” We might even go all pretentious and say it in French, “au revoir.” The thing about saying goodbye is that there is never enough time to say everything. I remember in childhood as I was going away my Mom would suddenly burst forth with a list. Have you got your money? Did you remember to pack your shoes? Don’t forget to call us when you get there. There is never enough time to say everything. There was a time and place when Jesus ascended into Heaven. We are not privy to the actual event. Classical painters like to depict it as Jesus floating up to Heaven. Clouds hovering. To be honest to the truth, we like to embellish actual events to make them memorable. I don’t know what choir of angels sang. I don’t know what clouds descended and then rose up. The point is that Jesus departed from His earthly existence. He promised to be with His disciples always. Then they were left alone. That which motivated them to carry on was the power of the Holy spirit dwelling in them. They all had a fire in their bellies. Very quickly they spread out and a huge amount of missionary journeys took place. It was time to spread the faith. Time to tell people about the message of Jesus. Based on results people were delighted to hear it. Very quickly new Christian communities sprang up everywhere. Enthusiasm gives birth to enthusiasm. We are always searching for something meaningful. Many people found what they were looking for in the Christian faith. They wanted to have a wonderful relationship with a personal God. They wanted to live holy lives instead of just talking about it. From the beginning the Christians referred to each other as saints. They lived by a very high moral code and they focused their lives on God. They were something wonderful to behold.

With love,
Fr. Pat