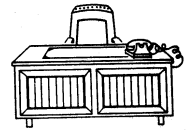


The Feast of the Ascension

May 21, 2023



From the Desk of
Fr. Romanus

Dear Parishioners,

Feast of the Ascension:

This Sunday is The Feast of the Ascension of the Lord. Though the actual day of the feast was last Thursday, many ecclesiastical provinces in the United States, including ours, have moved the feast to the Sunday following Ascension Thursday. This is in synch with the trend of moving some solemn feasts that fall on weekdays to the weekend in order to encourage greater participation. Many people readily excuse themselves from these celebrations on weekdays due to work schedules, etc. Hence, celebrating them on weekends encourages greater participation.

The Feast of the Ascension is a celebration of our belief that Jesus ascended to heaven forty days after his resurrection. His ascension underscores the completion of his earthly mission of saving humankind from the clutches of sin and death, and opening for us the gates to heaven. Celebration of the Ascension goes back to the 4th century and is attested to by Sts. Augustine, John Chrysostom and Gregory of Nyssa. It is also mentioned by *The Apostolic Constitution* and the *Pilgrim of Egeria*.

Ascension is home-coming for Jesus as he reunites with the Father in heaven. It also ushers in the era of the Holy Spirit as the fulfilment of Jesus' promise to his disciples not to leave them orphaned. As with every separation, the ascension created a sort of separation anxiety for the disciples. Jesus quickly comforted them and reassured them that it was for their own good that he returned to the Father. Unlike the limited time the disciples had with their Master, the presence of the Holy

Spirit will be for eternity. The Holy Spirit is a mark of continuity as we strive as Church to carry on the mission Christ entrusted to us.

Have a great week!

Fr. Romanus