



My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

First off, I want to wish all mothers a Happy Mother's Day. You are such a blessing to us, a witness of God's unconditional love. You may look at your life and see all of the flaws, but in your continued desire to love, you are a blessing to us.

This coming Thursday (May 18th) is the Solemnity of the Ascension of Jesus into Heaven (Masses are at 8am, 10am and 7pm). This great feast marks when Jesus, forty days after rising from the dead, ascends bodily into heaven. Here we recognize the great mystery of our God-made-flesh. He didn't just assume a body to walk among us. He didn't just take on our human nature "for a time." In ascending into heaven, He takes our full human nature into the very Heart of Almighty God, forever!

The second verse of the hymn "Alleluia! Sing to Jesus" speaks to this great mystery of the Ascension:

Alleluia! Not as orphans
Are we left in sorrow now;
Alleluia! He is near us;
Faith believes nor questions how.
Though the cloud from sight received him
When the forty days were o'er,
Shall our hearts forget his promise,
"I am with you evermore"?

Jesus doesn't leave us orphans, but continues to be present to us, albeit in a new way. Remember a few weeks ago, we heard about the two disciples who traveled Easter Sunday afternoon to Emmaus. Jesus walked with them, though they did not recognize Him. It was only in the breaking of the bread that their eyes were opened, and then He disappeared from their sight – to be present to them in His Eucharistic Body.

In His Incarnation (taking on human flesh), His Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven, Jesus transforms our lowly flesh. St. Irenaeus (AD +202), one of the Fathers of the Church, said (and I paraphrase), a body into which the Eucharistic Body of the Lord has entered – unless that person rejects God – cannot remain dead and corrupt forever... it must rise. By receiving the Eucharist – the Bread of Life – we are given, even in our bodies, the medicine for immortality – to live forever!

This is why we venerate the relics of the Saints. We believe that they are with God, and that one day, their bodies will rise from the dead in glory. In the meantime, these bodies were how the saints chose to serve God. They are opportunities for faith in the Communion of Saints and how God works through the whole Body of Christ – the Church.

This Thursday, relics of the two saints will be at Immaculate Conception Parish in Nashua. These saints – St. Manuel González García, a bishop and saint of the abandoned tabernacle, and Bl. Carlo Acutis, the first millennial raised to the altars, who died at 15, and had a deep reverence for the Blessed Sacrament – are the patrons of the Eucharistic Revival in our country. I invite you to come and celebrate the bodily Ascension of the Lord, by venerating His holy saints who want to help us on our way to heaven.