"To Lead an Apostolic Community, Under Authority, That Brings People to Jesus Christ."

Bishop's Note: Collect for the Feast of the Ascension

"Almighty God, whose blessed Son our Savior Jesus Christ ascended far above all heavens that he might fill all things: Mercifully give us faith to perceive that, according to his promise, he abides with his Church on earth, even to the end of the ages; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting.

Amen"

Today, May 29th, is the fortieth day after Easter and, throughout the church catholic, this day is known as the **Feast of the Ascension** - one of the major Holy Days of the church, which include: Christmas, Epiphany, Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Good Friday, Easter, and Pentecost. Many of our parishes will celebrate the reality of the Ascension of our Lord to the right hand of God today, and others will transfer the celebration of this feast to Sunday. In either case, there is no getting around the importance of this event in the life of the Apostles, the life of the Church, and our very own lives.

"And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven." (Acts 1:9-11)

With these words, the Resurrected Jesus ascended into heaven where he is seated at the right hand of the Father - answering his own question to the disciples in the Gospel of John: ***"Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before?"*** (John 6:62)

We proclaim our faith in this reality every Sunday in the Nicene Creed. We state it because it is an important aspect of our faith. We believe that Jesus sits enthroned in power at the right hand of the Father, welcoming the saints into heaven and waiting until the fulfillment of time, when he will return to judge the earth. However, in the meantime,

our Lord intercedes on our behalf. What an amazing reality, that The Lord of the universe - the savior of mankind, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords - is the same one who sits at his Father's side, pleading on our behalf.

Thus, when my daughter was born ill and I offered up desperate prayers in the name of Jesus it was, in fact, Jesus who leaned over to his Father and begged His intervention to supernaturally change the course of natural law and miraculously heal her...which He did!

Jesus, while seated at the right hand of the Father, is also very present with us in Word and Sacrament. He fills his church with his presence and grace.

Lastly, it is with Jesus' ascension into heaven that his promise to, "not leave us orphaned," (John 14:18) was fulfilled, when God sent us the Holy Spirit: ***"I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But the advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid."*** (John 14:25-28)

The Ascension means that, even though things may seem difficult for us in a fallen world, the King is on his throne, and he has sent us the Holy Spirit as our Advocate, Guide, Comforter and Provider. We need not let our hearts be troubled, but simply trust in the King!

God bless you all!

Bishop Menees

June 3	Bishop @ Sequoia Clericus Meeting
June 6 - 7	Visioning Retreat @ St. Francis of Assisi - Stockton
June 8	Bishop @ St. Columba - Fresno
June 10	Rural Deans Meeting 10am - 2pm