

**For The Bulletin Of  
May 8, 2016**

## **THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD**

*From Father Robert*

Human beings began wearing clothes around 100,000 or so years ago. Other members of the animal kingdom have “natural” clothes: their hides, scales, or shells. Human beings, however, are the only animals that fashion clothes, and this for various purposes. Among utilitarian uses, we put on clothes to keep warm, to protect us from rain and other elements, to insulate us from heat or danger, to mark us as having a particular job, purpose, or rank. Among the aesthetic uses of clothes, we wear clothes to enhance our skin color, body shape, or hide imperfections. Clothes can adorn us with status, mark a special occasion, and differentiate genders or cultures. Clothes can make us look more attractive and more powerful looking. All these differing uses of clothes, however, have one thing in common: clothes are always something added to us, apart from our being, and can be put on or taken off.

In today’s gospel Jesus speaks to His disciples about being “clothed with power from on high.” We can reject Jesus’ offer of a unique clothing, not pay attention to it, not use it rightly. Or we can wear this clothing with dignity and gratitude. The clothing Jesus offers us is not something made from plant fibers or animal skins. This clothing is a power that is the Holy Spirit Who takes up divine abode with us.

Jesus’ ascension is inseparable from Pentecost. The disciples continue Jesus’ ministry of preaching the Good News of death leading to risen life only after they have been “clothed with power from on high.” This is a “clothing” worn on the inside, a personal Presence – the Holy Spirit Who empowers them to be a new Presence of Christ in the world after His ascension. Jesus’ blessing before He was “taken up to heaven” was His last action-word in their midst. His blessing was His affirmation of the action-word they were to become on Pentecost. We disciples become for our world, through the power of the Holy Spirit, Who Jesus was for His world: the visible promise of salvation unfolding through action-words that pack the power of the Holy Spirit. Our being clothed in the power of the Holy Spirit is neither merely utilitarian nor simply aesthetic. This clothing changes us into those who become members of the very Body of Christ. This clothing becomes a habit of Life.

Jesus’ ascension, for us, is a gift and commissioning. We receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. We preach and teach in His name. We don’t do this on our own, as Jesus promised. We can’t set out to take up Jesus’ mission to preach the Good News until we open ourselves to the Holy Spirit’s Presence with and among us. This ensures that our work isn’t ours but Christ’s. Ultimately our mission is to preach not simply events, but a Person – Jesus, the risen One. Even more, with the Spirit, we *are* the Presence of the Risen Lord. This clothing is unequalled.

### ***Living The Paschal Mystery***

We are all familiar with the Catholic doctrine that the Holy Scriptures are the inspired Word of God. Through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, each of us is an inspired action-word of God when we are faithful to Jesus. This means, as the gospel suggests, that we are to preach and live as Jesus commanded. Repentance and forgiveness require that we first are willing to do as Jesus did – give ourselves over to the Spirit of God Who heals and gives Life. Having first experienced God’s saving action, we can be that saving action for others.

The Easter Season is now very quickly coming to a conclusion. How has this season of 50 great days made a difference in your life? Has it helped you experience the presence of the Risen Lord more personally? Has it changed you in any way?

- I know that I am “clothed with power from on high” when I...
- I am a new Presence of Christ to my family, friends, co-workers in these ways...
- I feel Jesus’ blessing upon me when...It affirms me by...

### ***About Liturgy: Silences During The Liturgy***

Several times during the Liturgy it is appropriate to pause in silence. These silent times enable us to surrender ourselves to God’s presence, to remember that the Spirit dwells within us and enables us to reverse the “absence” of the Ascension: through the power of the Spirit within us the risen Christ is present.

First, both the Rite for the Blessing and Sprinkling of Water and the Penitential

Act call for a brief period of silence and reflection. This time allows us to make the transition from our busy lives into God’s Presence, consciously surrender ourselves to God’s word-action within us, and call to mind anything that we have done that keeps us from giving ourselves over to taking up Jesus’ saving mission as His faithful disciples “clothed with power from on high.” Although this time is brief (and in some cases so brief as to be nonexistent) it is mightily important; this opens the door for our participation in the rest of the Liturgy. We take much time to prepare for important events in our lives, surely this brief time is no less important.

Second, after Communion there may be a brief period of silence. Since we have just shared in eating and drinking the Body and Blood of Christ, this is time afforded us to appreciate more fully what we have shared and think about how we might be a better presence of the Body and Blood of Christ to others in our daily living. We might consider one specific way during the coming week when we will consciously be the presence of the risen Christ for someone else.

### ***Mother’s Day***

Today we honor and give thanks to God for the vocation of mothers, grandmothers, great grandmothers, step mothers, foster mothers, and all those wonderful and holy women who nurture and give life in so many ways. You are being remembered in a special way at each liturgy this weekend and at the conclusion of each liturgy, are being invited to come forward for the Mother’s Day Blessing. A contribution has been made to the New Building

Fund from both the parish and from our Knights of Columbus in your honor. **The Altar Floral Arrangement this weekend is placed to the Glory of God and in loving memory of Fara Costanza by her daughter, Carole.**

***Congratulations Confermandi!***

At 10:00 a.m. yesterday morning, our high school confirmation students were confirmed in the Cathedral. On behalf of all of us, I extend heartfelt congratulations to each one of them as they completed their initiation through the Laying On Of Hands and Anointing with Sacred Chrism: **Chloe Abenoja, Brianna Cabanilla, Melvin Carrillo, Sandra Carrillo, Lisa Marie Cayaban, Maryfrances Dimaggio, Miguel Espinosa, Daphne Francisco, Matthew Hilton, Danielle Mirano, Diantha Ngo, Andrew Nguyen, Madison Perry, Baruch Rios, Phillip Spielman, Roger Spielman, Jason Tanique, and Kyle Thomas.**

***Supervisor Candidates Forum***

This coming Thursday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, our parish will host a Forum for all the Candidates who are running for the position of Supervisor in both Districts 3 and 5. Registration, Sign-ins, and Hospitality will take place in the Gathering Plaza beginning at 7:00 p.m., followed by a Beginning Prayer Experience, and then the Forum will begin promptly at 7:30 p.m. and conclude promptly at 9:00 p.m. The evening will be moderated by **Rev. Leslie Takahashi, Pastor, Mount Diablo Unitarian-Universalist Church, Walnut Creek.** A series of questions focusing on the economy, racial equality and justice, education, homelessness, employment, taxation, displacement, veterans services, and more will be

presented to each candidate for their responses. Written responses will be given by the candidates who cannot be present. I hope you join us for this very important civic event. As a contributing/participating member of CCISCO, we are helping to host this event.

***Pentecost***

Next weekend, we will celebrate The Great Fiftieth Day, Pentecost, and the conclusion of the Easter Season. Please remember to wear **RED!** There are two special rituals that will take place in the 10:00 a.m. liturgy: The Solemn Blessing of the New Icons following the homily and the Rite of Sending of the Neophytes Marking the Conclusion of Mystagogia. I hope you will plan to be with us for this wonderful celebration.

***Evening of Welcome and Discovery***

You are invited to be with us on Monday evening, May 16<sup>th</sup>, from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. for “An Evening of Welcome and Discovery.” The questions that have been placed into the Red Box will be shared and answered. This should be a lot of fun as we hear what kinds of things our parishioners wonder about as well as the answers that will be given by our panel consisting of **Frances Rojek, Director of Faith Formation, Peter Degl’Innocenti, Pastoral Associate, and Carolyn Krantz, Pastoral Associate for Social Justice.** I will serve as the evening’s Moderator. I hope you will plan to join us.

***Delta Deanery Pilgrimage***

Please be sure to put Saturday, August 27<sup>th</sup>, into your schedules to join us for our Delta Deanery Pilgrimage to the Cathedral for the Jubilee Year of Mercy. We will have two busses for

parishioners who will be going. The cost will be \$20 per person roundtrip. The pilgrimage will begin at 10:00 a.m. with a procession up the Pilgrim's Path, through the Holy Door of the Cathedral, and into the Cathedral for the Pilgrimage Mass. **Fr. Mark Wiesner, Missionary of Mercy Commissioned by Francis, Bishop of Rome**, will be our Presider and Homilist. The liturgy will be multi-lingual and multi-cultural, representing all of the cultures of our Deanery. Clergy, both priests and deacons, will be participating, along with liturgical ministers from each parish sharing in the various ministries. Each parish is being asked to create a parish banner to carry in the procession and to identify all the parishes of the Deanery. I will share more with you as the planning takes place. Please plan on joining us for this special spiritual event.

#### ***Parish Outreach Project***

From April 25 through April 29, St. Ignatius of Antioch parishioners and organizations provided evening meals and supplies to the Mountain View House Family Shelter in Martinez. Mountain View House is operated by Shelter Inc. and serves to get homeless families with children off the streets and into a safe temporary home. The shelter accommodates 7 to 10 families (up to 30 people) who meet regularly with a case manager who assists with stable housing placement and links families to services such as education, employment and therapy. On average, 90% of the families exiting this family emergency shelter move to stable housing, including long-term housing and stable, transitional housing.

On Monday, shelter guests dined on BBQ chicken, rice with vegetables,

mixed green salad and garlic bread with ice cream drumsticks and homemade chocolate chip cookies for dessert. Tuesday, our **Knights of Columbus** served baked ham, potato salad, macaroni salad, baked beans, rolls and butter and ice cream cups for dessert. On Wednesday a team from the **Pastoral Council** served a huge bowl of salad greens, beets in marinade, carrot salad, hard boiled eggs, thin sliced grilled chicken, Salvadoran rice and beans, rolls, baguettes and hot dogs for the kids. Thursday's menu featured BBQ chicken legs and thighs, cooked carrots, lumpia, scalloped potatoes, mixed green salad with ice cream sandwiches and homemade chocolate chip cookies for dessert. The week concluded with a carnivore's delight of BBQ chicken wings, ribs and tri-tips, shrimp jambalaya, sautéed zucchinis and carrots, fruit salad, mixed green salad with raspberry and blueberry Bundt cake for dessert.

Many thanks to **Vince Augusta, Will Avitabile, Bill Barbanica, Don Benson, Dave Costanza, Reggia Desmond, Sue Howell, Rick Howell, Oscar Jovel, Zoila Jovel, Lorraine Lohmeier, Vicki McCoy, Brian McCoy, Mrs. Oncena, Claudine Oncena, Nicholas Oncena, Chloe Oncena, Jose Palomino, Dave Simpson, Frances Rojek, Steve Rojek, Estrella Rusk and Catherine Vidaurri.**

#### ***Congratulations To Our Newest Knights***

This past Monday evening, our Knights of Columbus held a First Degree Exemplification for new members. Our congratulations to: **Milandro Yambao, Keith Hrabchak, Christoph Holl, Tim Cox, Mike Stubbs, and Joelan Tanique.**

### ***Family to Family Ministry***

We are seeking 8-12 loving and committed people to form a new Family to Family team. After 5½ years, the team members of the St. Ignatius of Antioch F2F ministry have decided to step back and work on another outreach program that is exploring the possibility of relocating a refugee family to our area.

The goal of the Family to Family ministry is to partner with a local low-income family who is experiencing significant challenges in their daily lives. The needs of the families vary anywhere from lack of full-time employment, transportation issues, educational needs and/or immigration issues, just to name a few. This ministry offers a unique opportunity to offer a hand up to a struggling low-income family by serving as their mentor and friend as they work toward achieving independence. This program is founded in the gospel call to serve the poor and to empower them in faith to become contributing members of society.

If you are longing to get involved in a program like this, we encourage you to prayerfully consider joining the St. Ignatius of Antioch Family to Family team. The “old” team will be available to help train and answer all your questions and to guide you in getting started. We promise this ministry will touch your hearts.

A training session will be held in the very near future so look for information in the weekly bulletin or contact Rick Howell (925-439-9225 or via email [rickandsuziehowell@yahoo.com](mailto:rickandsuziehowell@yahoo.com)).

On behalf of your Family to Family team, thank you for considering this important ministry.

### ***Thank You***

What would we do without all the volunteers who do so many things that make our parish the amazing community of faith that it is! Our thanks to:

...the “beautiful church cleaners”:

**Mila Rodrigo, Angela Bueno, Cathy Romeo, Mency Osborne, Rose Salamanca, Carole Miller, Jun Bajet, Steve Rojek.**

...those who clean and maintain the bathrooms in the church and parish hall:

**Mary Ewing, Patricia Britton, Harlan Young, Robert Goncalves, Steve Rojek, and Gino Ramos.**

....to our **counting teams** who are here every week to count the weekly collections.

...to our volunteers who assisted in the parish office last week: **Mary Ng, Harlan Young, Lorraine Lohmeier, Rowena Cayaban, Joe Fanfa and Bev Iacona.**

....to our St. Vincent de Paul and Mobile Mall volunteers who transported last week’s donations:

**Bob Carvalho and Barbara Jackson.**

....to our faithful weekly bulletin assembly team: **Bob Carvalho, Dave Costanza, Carole Miller, Judy Quicho, Vangie Parrilla and Dilcia Aparicio.**

....to those who donated food items, helped set up and serve at the lovely reception following Don’s concert on April 29<sup>th</sup> and cleaned up afterward :

**Frances Rojek, Estrella Rusk, Lorraine Lohmeier, Nancy Newton, Yvette Young, Maryann Peddicord, Will and Catherine Avitabile, Alicia Perez, Mary Anne Douville and Brian and Vicki McCoy.**