

ASCENSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

40.1 First Point

Jesus Christ, having come to this earth only to give us a new law and to accomplish the mysteries of our redemption, and having entirely fulfilled everything relating to the duties of his ministry as Legislator and Redeemer, there was nothing left to keep him in this world and he seemed to be in a sort of constrained condition, for the center of his glorious body was in heaven and his proper place was at the right hand of his Father.²⁷³ But the dealings he was still obliged to have on earth made it necessary for him to veil the radiance of his glory in his apparitions to them.

You who have left the world should be entirely freed from all human inclinations which tend only earthward. You should aspire only toward heaven and lift your mind and heart heavenward,²⁷⁴ because you are destined only for heaven and should work only for heaven, and because you will not find perfect rest until you are in heaven.

40.2 Second Point

It was on this day that Jesus Christ left the earth and ascended into heaven, where he has fixed his dwelling forever. It was on this day that his sacred humanity received the adoration of all the angels and all the just who entered heaven with him to take possession of their eternal happiness.

With all the saints, adore this sacred humanity to whom all power has been given in heaven and on earth.²⁷⁵ Unite yourself with all the saints to acknowledge and honor this humanity as it deserves.

Look upon the humanity of Jesus as the One in whom, as Saint Paul says, are all the treasures of God's wisdom and knowledge.²⁷⁶ It is from his humanity that our Savior draws, as from their source, all the graces which he pours out on those who by their good works and by their prayers make themselves worthy to share in them.

When will you be able to say with Saint Stephen that you see the heavens open and Jesus Christ who is there²⁷⁷ and ready to share his graces with you? Beg of him especially for the grace to be no longer preoccupied with anything except the things of heaven.

40.3 Third Point

Acknowledge that it is, indeed, a great advantage for you that Jesus Christ ascended into heaven; it is from there that come all the gifts which should enrich and adorn your soul. In fact, it is by virtue of the power over all creatures both in heaven and on earth which Jesus Christ received this day, that he is so generous toward his people.

As their head he makes them share in the life of grace, the fullness of which dwells in him, and as your mediator he presents your prayers and good works to God his Father.²⁷⁸

He himself prays for you²⁷⁹ to draw down God's mercy on you and prevent God from turning his anger against you when you offend him. Say with Saint Augustine, then, that Jesus Christ's ascension is your glory, the motive of your hope, and the promise of your happiness. Make yourself worthy to have Jesus Christ as your Sovereign, your Head, and your Mediator in heaven.

273 Mk 16:19
274 Col 3:1-2
275 Mt 28:18

276 Col 2:3
277 Acts 7:56
278 Col 1:18-20

279 Heb 7:25