**Homily for the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord**(6/2/2019)

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My dictionary defines ‘wonderful’ as ‘so unusual or magnificent that it causes wonder and amazement.” What a description of Jesus!

First, Jesus was wonderful in His birth. To save the world and redeem a fallen race, God sent not angelic armies, but a tiny baby, His only Son, to accomplish this majestic purpose, born not of a man, but of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus was wonderful in His life. His enemies could not find a single flaw in His character. His miracles and His teachings both testified to His divine authority. He really brought the Good News to the people.

Christ was also wonderful in His death and Resurrection. He suffered and died for us to make our salvation possible. And, His wonderful, glorious Resurrection opened for us the door to Heaven and eternal life.

Jesus is wonderful indeed in His Ascension! Now, He is seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us. He sent the Holy Spirit, the Advocate. With His promise of the Holy Spirit, we are strengthened in our belief that all things are possible with God.

The Ascension is not only about Jesus, but also about us, about our future life. Where Jesus is now, we hope someday to be. Jesus says, “I am going to prepare a place for you.” Although the life journey for each of us is different, our destination is the same, the Kingdom of Heaven. So, we hope today to have the promise of eternal life in heaven with Jesus Christ.

Jesus shows us our destiny. By His Incarnation, Jesus took the exact human nature of each and every one of us in soul, spirit, and body. He was truly human. In human nature, Jesus understands our humanity. He suffered our trials and frustrations, and shared our hope and joy in this world. He knew the normal human sufferings of being tired, thirsty, and rejected.

And, now by His Ascension, He shows us our future glory in Heaven. Our human nature is taken up to heaven with the Ascension of the Lord. He showed us our future glory. Through the Ascension of Jesus, our humanity entered into divine glory. This is a really really Good News. Jesus gives the truth about our life and our future. If we are faithful to Jesus, we also will come into the glory of the Father in heaven. This is our hope today with the Ascension of the Lord.

The Ascension also opened the door for the beginning of the Divine ministry of the Holy Spirit. When Jesus departed physically from the Apostles, they were not left in sorrow or grief. Instead, they were filled with joy and with great anticipation for the coming of the Holy Spirit. They would never be alone.

While the Resurrection was the turning point in human history regarding salvation, the Ascension was the turning point regarding the beginning of the Kingdom of God. That is why after the Ascension, the disciples returned to the Temple again praising God and went to the world again proclaiming the Good News to the people.

So, the Ascension of the Lord is not a departure ceremony, but the beginning of a new way for the disciples to be part of Christ and His mission.

Today, Jesus says to us, “I am with you always, until the end of the age.” God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, will be with us now and forever. We will never be alone. This is our identity, mission, and destiny.!