

THE ORTHODOX WEEKLY BULETIN VESTAL, CLIFFWOOD, NEW JERSEY

HOLY ASCENSION

Thou hast ascended in glory, O Christ our God, and gladdened Thy disciples with the promise of the Holy Spirit; and they were assured by the blessing that Thou art the Son of God and Redeemer of the world.

A JOYFUL FAREWELL

One of life's most difficult tasks is to bid final farewell to someone. What a sad and emotional experience this can be! With this in mind, it is perhaps, a bit puzzling to read in St. Luke's account of our Lord's Ascension that the departure from this world to His heavenly home. How could they possibly rejoice at the of never seeing their Master again?

The joyful reaction of the apostles to the Ascension indicated that they fully understood WHO Christ was, WHAT his mission encompassed, and WHY He couldn't remain with them on earth. Jesus was God incarnate. He lived as a Man among us for one divine purpose: TO SHOW US THE WAY TO ACHIEVE OUR SALVATION. After accomplishing this through His teaching and His example, and after conquering death by virtue of His Resurrection, Christ's work here was finished.

In order to provide us with the greatest amount of assistance in our personal struggle to show our worthiness to be numbered among the righteous in God's kingdom, our Lord had to leave us. Still, He did not leave us as orphans! No, as He promised His disciples at the Mystical Supper prior to His Crucifixion, Christ's exit opened the door for the entrance of the Holy Spirit into the world, who could BE IN ALL PLACES AND FILL ALL THINGS!

As we celebrate this Feast Day, let us do so joyfully! We are all disciples, called upon by the Saviour to obey Him, to live like Him, and to spread His Gospel to others. We eagerly await that wonderful day when He will come again with glory!

