

Ascension Thursday (Holy Ordering)

"And the Lord Jesus, after He had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God."

1. Tomorrow is the day to start your Novena to the Holy Ghost. This is the Novena of novenas... the first of the Novenas. We should all, therefore, want to pray this set of prayers. We have provided you a simple version.
2. Today His Majesty, Our Blessed Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ our King, has gone up to heaven to take His place, His throne at the right hand of God the Father. And He went up *with* His human nature... all glorified... perfectly holy and good. That means there, in heaven, all of Creation, the entire Cosmos, is now properly re-ordered to its Creator in Christ. Hmmm. Listen to Pope St. Gregory the Great: "Man has something in common with all levels of creation. He has existence in common with stones, life in common with trees, sensation in common with animals, intelligence in common with Angels. If, then, Man has something in common with all ranks of creation, in a certain sense all creation is summed up in Man." How much more so is this true for God made man! And His now glorified humanity has reached its final goal... final perfection. Pope St. Leo the Great: "human nature was lifted up and exalted above the dignity of all heavenly creation; passing above the hierarchies of Angels, elevated above the heights of Archangels; not suffering any limit or delay in its ascent through the heavenly heights till, having received a seat by the eternal Father, it was joined to the glory of His throne to whose nature it was united in the Word."
3. His Majesty, Jesus Christ, came down from heaven to take up our Human Nature, to recapitulate all of Creation in Himself... ultimately to bring it back to heaven ... glorified, perfect...divinized. In a word, His Majesty brings ORDER to the world... such that EVERYTHING is ordered to God and His greater glory. Thus, King David exclaims: "*O Lord, our Lord, how admirable is Thy name in the whole earth! For thy magnificence is elevated above the heavens*" (Ps. 8:2). St. Maximus the Confessor adds: "Christ is the blessed end for which all things have been created . . . the end for which God has willed all things and which is itself subordinated to nothing else It is for Christ . . . that all the ages exist. And all things

contained within them have found in Christ the beginning and the end of their call to existence." St. Thomas Aquinas: "what is first in any order is the cause of everything which follows it." Christ is the first to Ascend into heaven and takes the highest place...the first place in the order!

4. To do this He descended not only to earth, but even accepted death and descended down below the earth into hell, paralyzing the rebellious and disordered demons ... starting the re-ordering of all things from the very depths of the Cosmos to very heights of the Empyrean heaven. We see this in His rising from the dead and His completing the perfect ordering today by His glorious Ascension.
5. Even the angels tremble at this restoration. From the Preface of Holy Cross for the Mass we hear: "Through Whom Angels praise Thy Majesty, Dominations worship, Powers tremble (*tremunt*)." A hymn from the Roman Breviary for today's feast reads: "The Angels tremble as they see the change in Man's destiny. Flesh had sinned. Flesh washes away that sin and God-made-flesh reigns as God."
6. The final... perfect ordering, the restoration, was completed in heaven. Even the angels in all their glory longed to be perfected by seeing the Christ and knowing Him... thus, St. Peter says the Angels desired to look upon Him ("on whom the angels desire to look" (1Pet1:12)).
7. What is more, in heaven there is a hierarchy of angels, and they receive from God of the ONE WORD, little words, as it were... and they pass it down the hierarchy of angels in as much as they can handle it. The higher choirs can handle more than the lower choirs... each according to their capacity... But with the WORD INCARNATE before them... they had the WORD Himself united to Creation! The Summation of Creation was there to behold. Order had been completed. And this order cleanses... purges even the angels, says St. John of the Cross. In his Dark Night of the Soul this mystical doctor explains (cf. 12th Ch. of the Dark Night) how the wisdom of God, the word of God, purges and illuminates both angels and men but also passes *from God to men through* the angels. When it is given to men it is received in a very limited and painful way but also fills them with love.
8. Once in heaven, the Christ now enables this order to spread throughout the world. How? Holy Orders! God's hierarchy on earth. He made bishops

and priests...who "going forth preached everywhere, the Lord working withal, and confirming the word with signs that followed."

9. In the Book of Leviticus, dedicated to the Old Testament priesthood, we find God addressing nearly every disorder man can cause as well as how to undo the evil... to restore the order... How? By offering sacrifices to God *through* the priest: "*the priest shall pray for him, and for his sin, and it shall be forgiven him*" (4:26)... "*the Lord will be merciful unto them*" (4:20). Even if the disorder was not on purpose (committed accidentally or through ignorance)... it must be corrected in this manner, through the priest! Even the priests themselves need priests to help them overcome their faults and sins.
10. We see a continuation of this in the priest of Christ, saying the Confiteor at the start of Mass and praying as he offers of the bread on the paten: "Receive, O holy Father, almighty, eternal God, this spotless host which I, thine unworthy servant, offer unto Thee, my living and true God, for my own countless sins, offenses, and negligences, and for all here present..."
11. In any case, the Ascension is one of the reasons why the priest is ORDAINED through the Sacrament called "HOLY ORDER"... because the priest is here to be God's instrument in restoring order... In fact, I am doing that right now by preaching the truth, seeking to purge your minds and souls with the WORD of God's truth so that your hearts will be set on fire with love for Him... the priest first set order in our souls by way of baptism and then continues it through the confessional and giving us Holy Communion. All order of the UNIVERSE must be restored in Christ... AND likewise any Disorder... revolution... cannot be undone but by the priest.
12. Conversely, this is why the worst and most troubling evils in the world almost always have a fallen priest behind them... The very one called to order the most causes the most disorder when he fails. Nearly all the heretics were fallen priests...traitors. The Ark of the Covenant of old was lost for a time to the Philistines due to the impure priest sons of Heli. The Passion of Our Lord was only possible because of Judas. What is the first and primary error of Russia? They refused to be united to the High Priest, the Pontiff, the Pope, after the fall of Constantinople in 1453, calling Moscow the 3rd Rome. This very same error spread to England under Henry VIII.

13. On the other hand, unity, concord, and peace among men... holy and glorious works and happy, holy deaths are from the priest. Listen to King David speak of the high priest Aaron... who was re-ordered by way of being anointed with oil. "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity: like the precious ointment on the head, that ran down upon the beard, the beard of Aaron" (Ps. 132). Not the hierarchy indicated by oil on the head and then the beard. St. Joan of Arc united her dispirited army and country through the priests (confessions, daily Mass, and leading processions).
14. It is the priests that make us or break us. If order is lost in the world, they are inevitably at the bottom of it all. There would be no Passion of the Christ if Judas had not betrayed Our Lord. If order is to be restored, however, make no mistake, it can only be done through the priest of Christ. When Jonas flees, storms arise. When he cooperates with God, they are calmed and souls convert. So has it been arranged by almighty God. This IS a priestly Universe. God made it that way!
15. The Cure of Ars, St. John Vianney, sought to put order into a poor run down parish in rural France. Before long, after imparting the authentic Word of God to the people, purging them; order started to reach all of France, with 80,000 pilgrims a year coming to see one priest. But even this gifted priest, able to see into souls as well as Purgatory and Heaven, kept to the hierarchical structure of the God's Church. Listen to his biographer, Trochu: "he refrained from offering advice when he was aware that others might have more authority to give it. Thus, when a lady of Grenoble asked him whether or no, in order to pay for the education of her children, she might open a café, he sent her to her own parish priest" her pastor... (p. 306). Hierarchy of oil on head and then beard properly observed and respected brings unity among brethren!
16. Let us abide by the same order established by Our perfect Lord and King... Let us abide by legitimately established authority and we too will be a part of restoring the order of Christ in all creation... and some day rise up from the dead on the last day, ascending with Him to the heaven of heavens...