



HOMILY by Father Robbie Low

The Ascension of the Lord – Year C

Readings: *Acts 1:1-11, Ps 46, Ephesians 1:17-23, Luke 24:46-53*

It is the Feast of the Glorious Ascension. In many respects this is the climax of Salvation History. It is the celebration of the entrance of our humanity into eternity.

For this reason you, as aficionados of the Word will, no doubt, be expecting an intellectual tour de force, profound historical insights, cultural trimmings and the odd word you will have to look up in the dictionary. I hope you will not think me guilty of insouciance if I must disappoint you and say that this morning's offering has a child-like simplicity towards this great mystery, bordering on Fundamentalism.

Last week I received a note from the Treasurer of Catenians, the Catholic men's fellowship group saying that he had some good news. We normally dine at Truro Golf Club. Of late we have been having serious discussions about moving from there. The food is good. The atmosphere fine. The service – excellent Why move? Well the drawback is that the restaurant and bar are on the first floor and there is no disabled access. Some of our seniors members cannot make the stairs – especially our recent President who has had a stroke. They, more than anyone, miss the Fellowship in the time of their acute need. The good news is that the Club is investing in a chair lift.

A month before that the local Social Club in Lostwithiel, of which I am a trustee, having restored its upper rooms, had the same problem and the same answer – a stair lift. This means that the crippled and the handicapped can, finally, literally 'Rise Up' and enjoy the delights set out above.

The image is almost too simplistic but I want you to bear with me.

We, on earth, are the metaphorical cripples. We have no power of ourselves to help ourselves. We are, de facto, by our handicap unable to ascend to the delights of Heaven. Our handicap is our sin – our mortality is in Adam. We require something, or in this case someone, to carry us up into the eternal Godhead in order to live forever.

We have, at our disposal, that very means of transport in Christ Jesus Himself. By the very infusion of His Divinity into our Humanity, our humanity is lifted to the very heights. More than that, our temporal is swallowed up in the Eternal and our mortality overridden by His Immortality.

If we are in Him then the Ascent into Heaven is assured. That ‘handicap’ which prevents us rising is Sin. That is healed by our repentance and His grace. By feeding us with His Body and Blood, His divinity is poured into us. By our practice of love and devotion to Him, our Humanity is swept up into his Divinity.

The beautiful exchange takes place and we, the crippled sin sick fools, are given the means of glory by abiding in Christ, the Crucified, Risen, scended and Glorified Son Of God.

As Christ rose from the dead, ‘paid the price for Adam’s sin to our Eternal Father,’ as the great Easter hymn, the Exultet has it, so He ransomed Man from the bondage of SIN and its crippling effects, its power to exclude us from the banquet of Eternal Life.

The simple story of the Ascension – with all its puzzlement and hiddenglory is the final piece of the jigsaw of salvation. It is what Jesus ‘bangs on about’ at great length in St John’s Gospel – I in you and you in me as I am in the Father – and the clue is in the Sacraments of Confession and The Mass. As St Paul remarks, ‘Christ in you – the hope of glory’ or as it said on the side of the Lift company van I passed on the A30 yesterday – Elevator? - by regular service – we bring NEW LIFE.’

How much more the Lord of Glory will lift us up forever.