

GOD IS KING - ONLY THE CHRISTIAN IS NEVER ALONE

This week we celebrated a strange thing. We celebrated Jesus' departure from earth. He became man and was born on Christmas. For thirty years he lived a hidden life in Nazareth, sharing the mundane struggles experienced by every working family. For three years he travelled around Israel preaching the gospel, performing miracles, and training his Twelve Apostles. Then, when this work was finished, he redeemed fallen humanity: he reversed the tragedy of Original Sin through his sacrificial passion and death. Finally, to guarantee the trustworthiness of his teaching and his sacrifice, he rose from the dead and appeared to his followers' multiple times. But forty days later, which corresponds to today, with his disciples and Apostles gathered around him on the mountaintop, Jesus mysteriously ascended back into heaven, back to his Father's side, back to where he had come from when incarnated. Shouldn't we be mourning instead of celebrating? Shouldn't we regret and be sad that he is no longer among us? Doesn't it seem that he has abandoned us? Not at all. In the Preface for this celebration (the prayer the priest prays at the start of the Eucharistic prayer) the Church tells us why: "Christ... has passed beyond our sight, not to abandon us but to be our hope." "Christ is the beginning, the head of the Church; where he has gone and we hope to follow." If Jesus had not ascended into heaven, body and soul, humanity and divinity, we would not be able to hope for heaven ourselves. The ascension is the direct source of our hope. It means that we are never alone.

God bless,
Deacon John