



## May 16, 2010 Easter Time: The Ascension of Our Lord

*"Men of Galilee... Why do you stand looking up at the skies? This Jesus...will return..." Acts 1:11*

Dear Friends;

One of the ways that the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) defined the Church was the "People of God." It also referred to that people as being priestly. In a 1977 homily Archbishop Oscar Romero of San Salvador, El Salvador (died 24 March 1980) commented on what it means to be a priestly people.

How beautiful will be the day when all the baptized understand that their work, their job, is priestly work; that just as I celebrate Mass at this altar, so each carpenter celebrates Mass at his workbench; and each metalworker, each professional, each doctor with the scalpel, the market woman at her stand, is performing a priestly office!

How many cabdrivers, I know, listen to this message there in their cabs; you are a priest at the wheel, my friend, if you work with honesty, consecrating that taxi to God, bearing a message of peace and love to the passengers who ride in your cab.

Too often many of us live in a dualistic universe. God is in some heaven beyond the blue and we are here on earth. Every once in a while we do something "religious" or "spiritual" in case there really is a God or an after life. God and religion become an abstract removed from our daily lives.

The coming of Jesus as one of us proclaims that the place where we are to encounter God is in the midst of our lives. The God who took flesh in Jesus, who died and rose, continues to take flesh in us through the gift of the Holy Spirit. Therefore our lives—our world—is the realm of the sacred. We are priestly people because we hold the sacred in our hands.

We do not need a dead or magical language; we do not need esoteric rituals nor costumes of another era to exercise our priesthood. Our lives are already a profound mystery (meaning in the Greek sense an every unfolding sacred reality.) We hold within us the fire of the Divine Spirit who calls us to offer the sacrifice of self-giving love. To put it in the words of St. Teresa of Avila:

Christ has no body now on earth, but yours; no hands but yours; no feet but yours; yours are the eyes through which is to look out Christ's compassion to the world; yours are the feet with which he is to go about doing good; and yours the hands with which he is now to bless us now.

Together, both ordained and lay, may we grow as God's priestly people. And as we grow in the realization that we hold the sacred in our hands, may the Spirit transform us and our world into the image of the Risen Lord Jesus!

Peace,

*Fr Ron*