



Grand Prelate's Monthly Message

May 2026

On Thursday May 14, 2026, we celebrate Ascension Day, when we commemorate Jesus' ascension into Heaven after spending forty days following his resurrection with his disciples. On that day, the disciples stood there, watching as their risen Lord was lifted up before their very eyes. A cloud received Him out of their sight. No fanfare from earth—just awe, wonder, and perhaps a touch of confusion. Two angels appeared and asked a piercing question: “Why do you stand looking into heaven?” (Acts 1:11). It wasn't a rebuke, but a redirection. Jesus had ascended, but their mission was just beginning.

In February 2010 I was privileged to participate in the Knight Templar Holy Land Pilgrimage, and one day I got to stand on the Mount of Olives where this took place. I remember standing there when our guide shared this same question. On Ascension Day, we should not be looking upward, as if Christ's work is finished and distant? The ascension does not mark Jesus' absence—it marks His reign. He did not disappear; He was exalted. He ascended to the right hand of the Father, where He intercedes for us and rules with all authority.

For Christians today, the ascension reshapes how we live in three important ways.

First, it gives us confidence in Christ's authority. The One who walked these dusty paths now reigns over heaven and earth. No circumstance we face is outside of His control. When life feels uncertain, we remember that our Savior is not confined to a place—He is enthroned above all.

Second, it calls us to action. The angels' question reminds us that faith is not passive. The disciples could not remain on the mountain; they had to go into the world. In the same way, we are called to live out the gospel in our homes, workplaces, and communities. The ascension is not the end of the story—it is the launching point of our mission.

Third, it fills us with hope. The promise given on the Mount of Olives was clear: “This same Jesus... will come back in the same way you have seen Him go.” The ascension assures us that Christ will return. Our faith is not rooted only in what He has done, but in what He will do. Every step we take in obedience is anchored in that future promise.

So as we stand—in our hearts—on the Mount of Olives, we do not simply gaze into the sky. We lift our eyes with purpose. We trust in a reigning Savior, we walk in faithful obedience, and we live with expectant hope.

Christ has ascended—but He is not gone. He is present in power, active in purpose, and faithful to His promise.

Always and All Ways in Christ,

Rick Saunders
Grand Prelate