

LITURGY OF THE KINGDOM

The Ascension to Heaven

FIRST READING

Reader: *A reading taken from the spiritual heritage of humanity.*
Assembly: *From all time, Heaven has prepared the coming of the Kingdom.*
Reader: *Today a passage from a sermon by Saint Leo the Great,
a Pope from the 5th century and a doctor of the Church.*
It is written:

Just as at the Easter commemoration, the Lord's Resurrection was the cause of our rejoicing, so too the subject of our present gladness is His Ascension, as we commemorate and duly venerate the day on which the nature of our humanity, in Christ, was raised

above all the hosts of heaven,
over all the ranks of angels,
beyond the heights of all powers,
to sit with God the Father.

On such a providential order of events we are founded and built up.

In fact, God's grace becomes more wondrous, when, notwithstanding the removal from men's sight of what was rightly felt to command their awe, faith did not fail, hope did not waver, love did not grow cold....

On the contrary, the blessed Apostles made such progress after the Lord's Ascension that everything which had previously filled them with fear was turned to joy....

In fact, it was when He betook Himself back to the glory of the Father, that Jesus began, in an ineffable manner, to be nearer in respect to His divinity, after having become farther away in respect to His manhood.

Reader: *This was a passage from a sermon by Saint Leo the Great.*

Assembly: *Thanks be to God.*

* Saint Leo the Great, Sermon 74, *On the Lord's Ascension*, text adapted slightly from a version found on www.newadvent.com.