

# Our Heavenly Heritage



Our image of heaven has often been a place where God lives, surrounded by a crowd of adoring angels. We have situated this divine residence above the celestial canopy, beyond the clouds. This depiction of heaven was accepted by most people of the Ancient World, with only a few minor variations, and thus Jesus' ascension into heaven was easily understood. Heaven was also a place of eternal delight promised to believers who, after a good life on earth, would be admitted to paradise and spend eternity praising God. As our understanding of the universe has evolved, our theological reflections encourage us to re-examine this simple, ancient concept of heaven.

When Jesus spoke about the afterlife, he used the image of entering his Father's home. Christ assured us that a place would be set aside for each of us. This is synonymous with the concept of the family home - a place where we meet and experience communion through relationships. Jesus had full communion with the Father. Christ, God's gift to humanity, was now our gift to God and thus we could experience full communion with the Father.

Before he left his disciples, Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit. This promise was fulfilled and the Holy Spirit lives in us today just as in Jesus' era. On the day of our Baptism, we became children of God and heirs of heaven. The Holy Spirit is God's presence in our lives which enables us to fulfill his will through faith and hope. Through this active involvement, the Holy Spirit makes us witnesses of Christ and of the Gospel.

*Yves Guillemette , priest*

Translated by Honore Kerwin Borrelli

God Keeps His Promise : Possibilities Abound...