

- A. “Parting is such sweet sorrow” (“Romeo and Juliet” Act 2 ... Juliet’s comment)
- B. Feast of the Ascension ... involves a parting ... one that is bittersweet
(not unlike a son/daughter getting married)
- C. DEPARTURE – Jesus’ mission completed ... returns to the Father in glory
- St. Paul’s letter to Timothy (2 Tim. 4:6-8) common here at Res at funerals
 - “As for me, my life is already being poured out as a libation, and the time has come for me to depart. I have fought the good fight to the end; I have run the race to the finish; I have kept the faith; all there is to come for now is the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the upright Judge, will give to me on that Day; and not only to me but to all those who have longed for his appearance.”
 - Preface: “Where he has gone, we hope to follow.”
 - Paul’s great faith: “I have kept the faith.”
 - an active faith ... not standing looking up into the heavens ... sent to the Gentiles
 - our faith is one that expresses itself in making the world a better place
- D. HOPE – Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us ... ASCENSION A FEAST OF HOPE
- Pope John Paul II canonized Josephine Bakhita in the year 2000
 - She died in 1947 after life of loving service ... was enslaved, freed, became a religious
 - Her vision: she was created by God ... experienced being known, loved, awaited
 - Her God was like the Father of the Prodigal Son ... a God who welcomes us home
 - This world is not our final home / destined for a new heaven and a new earth
 - Her hope: awaited by God ... who sits at the right hand of the Father
- E. INTERCESSION: Jesus intercedes for us at the right hand of the Father ... not just us but all people – whatever race, religion, culture.
- In 1943, Etty Hillesum, a 27 year old Jewish woman, was executed in a concentration camp ... during the last two years of her life she recorded her experiences – published in a volume – *An Interrupted Life*
 - Jesus must have been interceding for her for how could she have written:
 - “I now realize, God, how much You have given me. So much that was beautiful and so much that was hard to bear. Yet whenever I showed myself ready to bear it, the hard was directly transformed into the beautiful. And the beautiful was sometimes harder to bear, so overpowering did it seem. To think that one small human heart can experience so much, oh God, so much suffering and so much love, I am grateful to You, God, for having chosen my heart, in these times, to experience all the things it has experienced.” – 198
- F. The risen and ascended Lord is here in this Eucharist: still interceding for us; still offering us hope; still call us to go out and share his love with others.