Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord (B)

Gospel text (*Mk* 16:15-20): (…) After he spoke to them, was taken up into heaven and took his seat at the right hand of God. But they went forth and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the word through accompanying signs.

Christ's Ascension: the human being has entered into intimacy with God in a new way

EDITORIAL TEAM evangeli.net (based on texts by Benedict XVI)
(Città del Vaticano, Vatican)

Today, Jesus takes his leave of the Apostles. Immediately afterwards, he was "lifted up", and a cloud took him out of their sight. This is the mystery of the Ascension. The verb "to lift up" was originally used in the Old Testament and refers to royal enthronement. Thus Christ's Ascension means, in the first place, the enthronement of the Crucified and Risen Son of Man, the manifestation of God's kingship over the world.

However, there is an even deeper meaning that is not immediately perceptible. The presence of the cloud that "took him out of their sight", recalls a very ancient image of Old Testament theology (from the cloud of Sinai…, to the luminous cloud on the mountain of the Transfiguration): it calls to mind once and for all the same mystery expressed in the symbolism of the phrase, "seated at the right hand of God".

—In Christ ascended into Heaven, the human being has entered into intimacy with God in a new and unheard-of way; man henceforth finds room in God for ever.