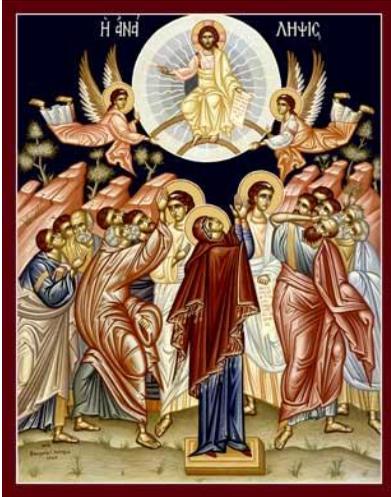
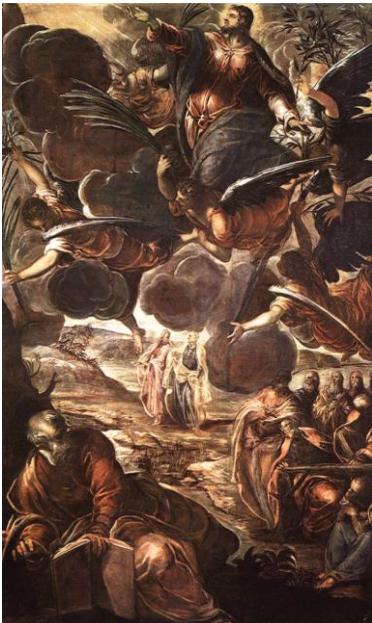


ASCENSION DAY – 21st MAY

Ascension Day is one of the great feasts of the Christian Church, kept forty days after Easter. This year we will be celebrating with a United Eucharist, in Caldy Church, at 7.30 pm.



This Greek Orthodox icon gives a symbolic representation. It is divided into two parts. Above, Heaven is a scene of order, with Christ extending one arm in blessing, showing love, and holding a scroll, representing knowledge, in the other. Below, all is disorder, except for Mary, who at the centre of the piece, represents the Church, patiently waiting for Jesus' return. We have the two angels who spoke to the disciples: *Then two angels in white clothes said to the disciples, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven."* Acts 1:11.



Tintoretto's painting, from the Scuola Grande di San Rocco in Venice, dates from 1580, and is very different. Tintoretto is not so concerned with the symbolism, but paints as if he were a witness to the scene. But Tintoretto, as so often, chooses an unusual and dramatic point of view. He paints as if looking down on the scene, with Christ ascending towards the viewer and the disciples receding from us.

In the icon there is no sense of movement: Christ could be ascending or descending. In the Tintoretto, the ascent is clear, but it is towards us, not away from us.