

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Rev. 11: 19a, 12: 1-6a, 10ab; Ps. 45; 1 Cor. 15: 20-26; Lk. 1: 39-56

In the Collect for this Sunday, we implore: 'Almighty ever-living God, who assumed the Immaculate Virgin Mary, the Mother of your Son, body and soul into heavenly glory, grant, we pray, that, always attentive to the things that are above, we may merit to be sharers of her glory.' The Feast of the Assumption invites us all to raise our minds and hearts above the trials and tribulations of this life and to think of the things of heaven.

Over the past three weeks, Jesus has said that He is the bread that came down from heaven and that whoever believes in Him would have everlasting life. With her assumption, Mary draws our eyes toward heaven where she has taken her place with Jesus and, in the midst of our struggles, we have the hope that, through our faith in Jesus, we may one day follow her.

Mary was the pure, uncorrupted and incorruptible ark of the new covenant between God and His people. When God made a covenant with Moses, that was sealed with the Ten Commandments, He gave Moses detailed specifications for the construction of the Ark of the Covenant (Ex. 25), the tent that was to house the Ark (the Tent of the Lord's Presence), and all the furnishings for the tent.

Since He had taken such care with the housing of the stone tablets that were the sign of His covenant with the Jewish people, it should come as no surprise that He would take even more care with the vessel housing the sign of His new covenant, Jesus. Mary was the Ark of the New Covenant specially and specifically created by God to hold His Son, Jesus, and, because of this, she was always in total union with God.

Mary lived an earthly life affected by the events taking place around her but, at the same time, she was detached from these events. At every turn, we learn that she 'pondered all these things her heart'. In the midst of so many trials, Mary was able to keep her attention focused on God who created her for a very specific purpose; to contain the Holy of Holies, the saviour of the world. Mary was assumed into heaven body and soul to complete her total union with God, a union that began on earth.

The Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary reminds us that we, also, are created by God and called to be in union with Him. Unfortunately for many of us, the distractions of this world have intruded on our intimacy with God. Unlike Mary, we have difficulty in keeping ourselves pure and detaching ourselves from the things of this world. But Mary, in her maternal way, wants to lead us to our heavenly home to be with Jesus.

To come into this union with God, we need to purify our minds and our hearts through the frequent reception of the Sacraments and spending time with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. But also, to guide us toward our heavenly home, we would do well to enlist the maternal assistance of Mary by praying the Holy Rosary.

At the conclusion of the Holy Rosary we pray for Mary to guide us to Jesus:

'Hail holy queen, Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To thee do we send up our sighs mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us and after this our exile, show unto us the Blessed Fruit of thy womb, Jesus, O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.'