



Mary: A Sign of Hope

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REGARDING THE ROLE of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the history of salvation, the Second Vatican Council (*Lumen Gentium*, chapter 8) teaches that she is closely united to Christ and is, as it were, a “mirror” of Christ, her Son, who saved humanity from sin and death. With regard to her relationship with the Church, Mary is considered the most eminent member of the People of God and the model of faith and love.

At the Annunciation, the angel Gabriel addressed Mary as *kecharitomene*, meaning, “highly favored,” or “full of grace,” as we say in the prayer, Hail Mary. Yet this dignity did not originate from Mary herself; it was entirely a gift of God, who looked with favor upon his humble servant. We Catholics believe that one of the greatest graces bestowed upon Mary was her Immaculate Conception: she was conceived without original sin. This was because she was chosen to be the Mother of the Messiah, the Son of God. It was fitting that Jesus, who was without sin and who would redeem humanity from sin, should be born of a woman untouched by sin.

The mystery of the Assumption, or Mary’s being taken up into heaven at the end of her earthly life, may be seen as a consequence of her Immaculate Conception. She “conquered” sin from the very beginning of her life. Therefore, her body was not subject to corruption in the tomb, which is a consequence of death, itself a result of sin. In proclaiming this dogma in his Apostolic Constitution *Munificentissimus Deus* (November 1, 1950), Pope Pius XII declared:

“The Immaculate Mother of God, the ever Virgin Mary, having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory.”

This doctrine also points us to Christ. Mary’s Son conquered sin and death. He rose again in his glorified body. He also conquered death on behalf of humanity. Thus, those who believe in Christ and are baptized in his name “die to sin and rise to a new life.” Yet God has not yet granted humanity the fullness of victory over death. At death, our bodies decay. Only at the end of time, in the resurrection of the body, will these bodies rise again and be reunited with their glorified souls.

By a privilege granted to her alone, however, Mary did not have to undergo this condition. She did not have to wait until the end of time for the redemption of her body. She was taken up and glorified, body and soul, in heaven, sharing in the glory of her Son.

While she walked on earth, Mary cooperated in her Son’s work of salvation through her obedience to God’s will, her faith, her hope, and her love. She remained faithful from the Annunciation to the foot of the Cross. There on Calvary, Jesus entrusted his beloved disciple—representing all believers—to Mary as her son. Having been assumed into heaven, she continues to care for and pray for her children. The Church looks to Mary as a model of the virtues that all its members should imitate.

The Church also sees Mary as a sign of hope and a source of strength while journeying through this world. Where Mary is now, we hope one day to be. What she is now—glorious in body and soul—we too hope to become in the future.

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Antiphon (cf. Rev 12: 1)
(*Recited when there is no opening song*)

A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon beneath her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars.

Greeting

(*The sign of the cross is made here.*)

P—The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All—And with your spirit.

Introduction

(*These or similar words may be used to address the assembly.*)

P—Today, the Church celebrates the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This feast reminds us of our belief that, at the end of her earthly life, Mary was taken body and soul into heavenly glory. The Assumption is a sign of God's victory over sin and death and a source of hope for all Christians, for where Mary has gone, we too hope to follow. As we honor our Blessed Mother, let us ask for her prayers that we may remain faithful to Christ and one day share in the joy of heaven.

Penitential Act

P—Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.
(*Pause*)

P—You were sent to heal the contrite of heart: Lord, have mercy.

All—Lord, have mercy.

P—You came to call sinners: Christ, have mercy.

All—Christ, have mercy.

P—You are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us: Lord, have mercy.

All—Lord, have mercy.

P—May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

All—Amen.

Gloria

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Collect

P—Let us pray. (*Pause*)

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.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

All—Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD



First Reading

(Rev 11:19a; 12:1–6a, 10ab) (*Sit*)

The book of Revelation proclaims a great vision of a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon beneath her feet and in her head there is a crown of twelve stars. This image also speaks of Mary's glorification in heaven.

A reading from the Book of Revelation

GOD'S temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant could be seen in

the temple.

A great sign appeared in the sky, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. She was with child and wailed aloud in pain as she labored to give birth. Then another sign appeared in the sky; it was a huge red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on its heads were seven diadems. Its tail swept away a third of the stars in the sky and hurled them down to the earth. Then the dragon stood before the woman about to give birth, to devour her child when she gave birth. She gave birth to a son, a male child, destined to rule all the nations with an iron rod. Her child was caught up to God and his throne. The woman herself fled into the desert where she had a place prepared by God.

Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have salvation and power come, and the Kingdom of our God and the authority of his Anointed One."

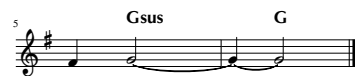
—The word of the Lord.

All—Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm (Ps 45)

R—The queen stands at your right hand, arrayed in gold.

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1. Hear, O daughter, and see; turn your ear, forget your people and your father's house. (**R**)

2. So shall the king desire your beauty; for he is your lord. (**R**)

3. They are borne in with gladness and joy; they enter the palace of the king. (**R**)

Second Reading (1Cor 15:20–27)

The Apostle Paul reflects on both Adam and Jesus Christ. Adam represents death because of sin

but Jesus Christ, as the last Adam, represents man's salvation through his bodily resurrection. Like her divine Son, Mary was spared from the corruption of the body.

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

BROTHERS AND SISTERS: Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through man, the resurrection of the dead came also through man. For just as in Adam all die, so too in Christ shall all be brought to life, but each one in proper order: Christ the firstfruits; then, at his coming, those who belong to Christ; then comes the end, when he hands over the Kingdom to his God and Father, when he has destroyed every sovereignty and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death, for "he subjected everything under his feet."

—The word of the Lord.
All—Thanks be to God.

Alleluia (*Stand*)

All—Alleluia, alleluia. Mary is taken up to heaven; a chorus of angels exults. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel (Lk 1:39–56)

P—A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke
All—Glory to you, O Lord.

MARY set out and traveled to the hill country in haste to a town of Judah, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth filled with the Holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken

to you by the Lord would be fulfilled."

And Mary said: "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. For he has looked with favor on his lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed: the Almighty has done great things for me and holy is his Name. He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation. He has shown the strength of his arm, and has scattered the proud in their conceit. He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, and has lifted up the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. He has come to the help of his servant Israel for he has remembered his promise of mercy, the promise he made to our fathers, to Abraham and his children forever."

Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.

—The Gospel of the Lord.
All—Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily (*Sit*)

Profession of Faith (*Stand*)

All—I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, (at the words that follow, up to and including and became man, all bow) and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the

dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayer of the Faithful

P—After her earthly sojourn, the Blessed Virgin Mary was taken body and soul into God's glory. Let us ask for the grace of perseverance that someday we may share her happiness in heaven, as we pray:

R—Lord, draw us to yourself.

C—Father, you preserved the virginal body of the Blessed Virgin Mary from the corruption of the grave. Raise our mortal bodies and clothe them with immortality at the resurrection of the dead. We pray: **(R)**

C—You exalted the Blessed Virgin Mary above the angels and saints. May all generations call her blessed and seek her maternal protection. We pray: **(R)**

C—In her pilgrimage on earth, Mary cooperated by her obedience, faith, hope and burning charity in the work of the Savior. Let us imitate her by listening to and obeying the Word of God. We pray: **(R)**

C—The Blessed Virgin Mary is a sign of true hope and comfort for the pilgrim people of God. At the end of our pilgrimage on earth, may she show us the blessed fruit of her womb, Jesus our Lord. We pray: **(R)**

C—The Blessed Virgin Mary is our powerful intercessor before the Blessed Trinity in heaven. May she pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. We pray: **(R)**

P—Father, as we honor the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, may we enjoy your blessing and her maternal protection, so that where she is now, we hope someday to follow.
All—Amen.



Presentation of the Gifts *(Stand)*

P—Pray, brethren...
All—May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

Prayer over the Offerings

P—May this oblation, our tribute of homage, rise up to you, O Lord, and through the intercession of the most Blessed Virgin Mary, whom you assumed into heaven, may our hearts, aflame with the fire of love, constantly long for you.
Through Christ our Lord.
All—Amen.

Preface
(The Glory of Mary assumed into heaven)

P—The Lord be with you.
All—And with your spirit.
P—Lift up your hearts.
All—We lift them up to the Lord.
P—Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All—It is right and just.

P—It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord.
For today the Virgin Mother of God was assumed into heaven as the beginning and image of your Church's coming to perfection and a sign of sure hope and comfort to your pilgrim people; rightly you would not allow her to see the corruption of the tomb since from her own body she marvelously brought forth your incarnate Son, the Author of all life.
And so, in company with the choirs of Angels, we praise you, and with joy we proclaim:
All—Holy, Holy, Holy... (Kneel)

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Acclamation *(Stand)*
All—We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

THE COMMUNION RITE
The Lord's Prayer

All—Our Father...
P—Deliver us, Lord...
All—For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever.

Invitation to Peace
Invitation to Communion
(Kneel)

P—Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.
All—Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Communion Antiphon
(Lk 1:48–49)
All generations will call me blessed, for he who is mighty has done great things for me.
Prayer after Communion
(Stand)

P—Let us pray. *(Pause)*
Having received the Sacrament of salvation, we ask you to grant, O Lord, that through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, whom

you assumed into heaven, we may be brought to the glory of the resurrection.
Through Christ our Lord.
All—Amen.

THE CONCLUDING RITES
P—The Lord be with you.
All—And with your spirit.

Solemn Blessing
P—Bown down for the blessing.
(Pause)
May God, who through the childbearing of the Blessed Virgin Mary willed in his great kindness to redeem the human race, be pleased to enrich you with his blessing.
All—Amen.

P—May you know always and everywhere the protection of her, through whom you have been found worthy to receive the author of life.
All—Amen.

P—May you, who have devoutly gathered on this day, carry away with you the gifts of spiritual joys and heavenly rewards.
All—Amen.

P—And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, (†) and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever.
All—Amen.

Dismissal
P—Go in peace. The Mass is ended.
All—Thanks be to God.