

Homily Feast of the Assumption Sunday Week 20 Year C 2022

Adapted from thoughts of Cardinal Avery Dulles: In 1950, Pope Pius XII proclaimed the dogma of the Assumption: that 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. Pope Emeritus Benedict added: The Mother of God is so deeply integrated into the mystery of Christ that at the end of her earthly life she already participates wholly in her Son's Resurrection. She lives what we await at the end of time but she already lives what we proclaim in the Creed. We look forward to the Resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Mary is the Holy Ark that contains the presence of God, a presence that is a source of consolation and total joy. Mary is the **'visit' of God** that creates joy for us.

But let us not limit ourselves to admiring Mary in her destiny of glory, as a person very remote from us. No! We are called to see in her all that the Lord, in his love, wanted to do for us too. Our final destiny is to live through faith in a perfect communion of love with him. Mary is the dawn and the splendour of the Church triumphant; she is the consolation and the hope of people still on the journey. God is waiting for us: this is our great joy and the great hope that is born from today's Feast. Mary visits us, and she is the joy of our life and joy is hope.

Pope Francis adds: Mary the Mother of Christ and of the Church is always with us. She walks with us always. Mary, therefore, shares this dual condition. She has already entered, once and for all, into heavenly glory. But this does not mean that she is distant or detached from us. Mary accompanies us, struggles with us, and sustains us in our fight against evil.

The mystery of Mary's Assumption body and soul is fully inscribed in the resurrection of Christ. Jesus entered into eternal life with the humanity he had drawn from Mary; and she, the Mother, who followed him faithfully throughout her life, followed him with her heart, and entered with him into eternal life which we also call heaven, paradise, the Father's house.

Having lived her Son's Passion in the depths of her soul, Mary was fully united with him in his death, and so she was given the gift of resurrection. Christ is the first fruits from the dead and Mary is the first of the redeemed, the first of 'those who are in Christ.' She is our Mother, but we can also say that she is our representative, our sister, our eldest sister, she is the first of the redeemed who has arrived in heaven.

A priest was talking to a group of children about "being good" and going to heaven. At the end of his talk, he asked, *"Where do you want to go?"*

"Heaven! Heaven!" Yelled Little Lisa.

"And what do you have to be to get there?" asked the priest.

And little Johnny yelled: **"Dead!"**