



The Holy See

SOLEMNITY OF THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

POPE FRANCIS

ANGELUS

*Saint Peter's Square
Wednesday, 15 August 2018*

[Multimedia]

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Good morning!

On today's Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the holy faithful People of God joyfully express their veneration of the Virgin Mother. They do so in the common liturgy and also with thousands of different forms of piety; and the prophesy of Mary herself takes place in the same way: "all generations will call me blessed" (Lk 1:48). Because the Lord has raised his humble handmaiden. Her Assumption into heaven, in body and soul, is a divine privilege accorded to the Holy Mother of God for her particular union with Jesus. It is a *corporal and spiritual union*, which began with the Annunciation and matured throughout Mary's life through her unique participation in the mystery of her Son. Mary always went with her Son: she followed Jesus and thus we say she was the first disciple.

Our Lady's existence unfolded like that of an ordinary woman of her time: she prayed, managed her family and home, attended the synagogue.... However every daily action she performed was always done in total union with Jesus. And on Calvary this union culminated, in love, in compassion and in heartache. For this reason God also gave her full participation in Jesus' *Resurrection*. The body of the Blessed Mother was preserved from corruption, like that of the Son.

Today the Church invites us to contemplate this mystery: it shows us that *God wishes to save the whole man*, that is, to save *soul and body*. Jesus rose with the body he had assumed from Mary;

and he ascended to the Father with his transfigured humanity; with his body, a body like ours, but transfigured. The Assumption of Mary, a human being, gives us confirmation of what our glorious fate will be. Greek philosophers had already understood that the soul of man is destined to happiness after death. However, they disregarded the body — considered the prison of the soul — and they did not understand that God had planned for the human body to be joined to the soul in the heavenly beatitude. Our body will be there, transfigured. This — the “*resurrection of the flesh*” — is a specific element of Christian revelation, a cornerstone of our faith.

The wondrous reality of the Assumption of Mary reveals and confirms the unity of the human person and reminds us that we are called to *serve and glorify God with our whole being*, soul and body. To serve God with the body alone would be the action of slaves; to serve him with the soul alone would be counter to our human nature. Around the year 220, a great Father of the Church, Saint Irenaeus, stated that “the glory of God is a living man; and the life of man consists in beholding God” (*Against Heresies*, iv, 20, 7). If we live this way, in joyful service to God, which is also expressed in generous service to our brothers and sisters, then on the day of the resurrection our fate will be like that of our heavenly Mother. We must therefore fully dedicate ourselves to accomplishing the exhortation of the Apostle Paul: “glorify God in your body” (1 Cor 6:20), and we shall forever glorify him in heaven.

Let us pray that Mary, through her maternal intercession, may help us live our daily journey in the earnest hope of being able to reach her one day, with all the Saints and our loved ones, all in heaven.

After the Angelus, the Holy Father continued:

Dear brothers and sisters, I would like to entrust to Mary, Comforter of the Afflicted — whom we contemplate today in the glory of Paradise — the anguish and torment of those who, in so many parts of the world, are suffering in body and in spirit. May our heavenly Mother obtain comfort, courage and peace for all.

I think in particular of those who are suffering from the tragedy that occurred yesterday in Genoa, which claimed victims and caused distress among the population. As I entrust to God’s mercy the people who lost their lives, I express my spiritual closeness to their family members, to the injured, to the displaced and to all those who are suffering due to this tragic event. I invite you to join me in prayer for the victims and for their loved ones; let us recite the *Hail Mary* together.

I greet all of you, people of Rome and pilgrims from different countries. I thank you for being here and I wish you a good Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady. And please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch. *Arrivederci!*

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