

August 15th: Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Gospel text (Lk 1:39-56): 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.

"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my Savior"

Fr. Josep ALEGRE Abbot emerit of Santa Maria de Poblet

Today, we celebrate the solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in body and soul to Heaven. “Today —St. Bernard says— the Virgin, full of glory, is taken up to heaven, showering the celestial beings with joy.” And he will add these nice words: “What a beautiful present the earth is sending to heaven today! With this wonderful gesture of friendship —such as giving and receiving— the human and the divine, the earthly and the heavenly, the humble and the sublime, merge into one. It is there, the most precious earthly fruit, where the best presents and the most valuable gifts come from. Taken up to heaven, the Virgin Mary will lavish her gifts on all men.”

The first gift she lavishes on us is the Word that she knew how to keep so faithfully in her heart, by making it bear fruit from the very profound and warm silence. With this Word in her interior space, while begetting in her womb the Life for all men, “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” (Lk 1:39-40). Mary’s presence exults in joy, and Elizabeth says: “For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy” (Lk 1:44).

She give us the gift of her praise, her same joy made music, her Magnificat: “My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my Savior...” (Lk 1:46-47). What a beautiful gift the heaven sends back to us with Mary’s song, made word of God. In this song we find the signs to learn how the human and the divine, the earthly and the celestial blend together, while being able to respond, as She does, to the gift God presents us through his Saint Mother, his Son: to become a gift from God to the world, and tomorrow, a gift from mankind to God, by following Mary’s example, who precedes us in this glorification which we are bound to.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

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“The feast of the Assumption of our Lady prompts us to acknowledge the basis for this joyful hope. Yes, we are still pilgrims, but our mother has gone on ahead, where she points to the

reward of our efforts. She tells us that we can make it. And, if we are faithful, we will reach home.” (Saint Josemaría Escrivá)

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“On this Solemnity of the Assumption let us look to Mary: She opens us to hope, to a future full of joy and teaches us the way to achieve it: welcoming in faith: by welcoming her Son with faith; by never losing the friendship with him but letting ourselves be illuminated and guided by his word” (Benedict XVI)

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“The Most Blessed Virgin Mary, when the course of her earthly life was completed, was taken up body and soul into the glory of heaven, where she already shares in the glory of her Son's Resurrection, anticipating the resurrection of all members of his Body.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 974)