

Assumption of Mary – B
Aug. 14-15, 2018

Today we celebrate the feast of the Assumption of Mary, as she is taken body and soul, into Heaven, at the end of her earthly life.

Today is a very important feast. It is the fulfillment of the promise made to Adam and Eve and of the plan of God for us from the beginning.

God's plan for us, before He created Adam and Eve, was that if they did not sin by eating the forbidden fruit, they would live a long life on Earth and at the end of that life they would be taken body and soul into Heaven. That was the plan God had for all of us, that we would not die but live complete, body and soul, in Heaven for all eternity after our time on Earth is done.

We know that Adam and Eve did sin; they did disobey and did eat the forbidden fruit, which the serpent said would make them like gods knowing good and bad. They learned what bad and evil was as they created it; and with evil comes the rejection of God who gave them life and they choosing death - the fruit of evil. Their punishment was not only loose the Garden of Paradise but to suffer and die. This was the original sin passed on to all their descendants including ourselves. Because of original sin we all will live outside the Garden of Paradise and we die.

But that was not God's plan for us; He wanted us to be with Him in Paradise, walking with Him in the garden and live forever with body and soul united. So God gave us another chance to undo the choice of Adam and Eve and the results of sin and death. God sent Jesus to walk with us in the heat of the desert of this earth as God walked with Adam and Eve in the coolness of the garden; and Jesus then undid the effects of Adam & Eve's original sin. In place of being tempted by the serpent - He cast out demons. In place of sickness and pain - He healed the sick, in place of earning their food by the sweat of their brow - He fed the 5 & 7,000, in place of dying - He raised the dead. But that was not enough to temporarily take care of our daily bodily hunger with bread and fish - but He took the bread and wine and made it into His eternal life giving body and blood for us to eat and drink. So that unlike those He raised from the dead, who lived their lives and died again, if we eat His Body and drink His Blood we will never die - but continue living - not in the desert of Earth - but once again with God in the Paradise of Heaven.

We heard Jesus say in Last Sunday's Gospel: "Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the desert, but they died; this is the bread that comes down from heaven so that one may eat it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world."

But you may say "I know many people who believed and died, how can you say this is true, that I can believe and trust my life to this?" "Where is the proof that we will not die but have eternal life in Heaven?" The proof is this feast of the Assumption of Mary, body and soul, into Heaven at the end of her earthly life.

Mary is the first Christian, the first to believe in Jesus - from the moment of the Annunciation when the Angel Gabriel asked her if she would be willing to be the mother of Jesus - the Son of God. Mary's response was "Let it be done to me according to your word." Unlike Adam and

Eve who tried to be like gods and make their own choice, Mary said, as a humble servant: "Let God's will be done!" And she then participated in the incarnation of Jesus, as God takes on human flesh and blood. The flesh and blood of Jesus - that undid the sin of Adam and Eve, that cast out demons, that healed the sick, that forgave sinners, that raised the dead, that was given at the Last Supper and in every Mass in Communion, that died on the cross, rose from the dead and ascended into Heaven - to destroy death, give resurrection of the body and open paradise; where did that humanity and human body of Jesus come from that did this, and that we receive in the Eucharist? It came from Mary, from her human DNA united to the Father's divinity by which Jesus was incarnated and became flesh and blood. The body and blood that Jesus acted through to redeem us, to give us a new chance to choose life, that overcame death and opened Heaven was Mary's DNA. Thus the Fathers of the Church from St. Paul on speak of Jesus being the New Adam and Mary the new Eve - from whom we receive new life, the eternal life of God and the promise of the new Paradise of Heaven.

Thus as a proof of God's original plan for us: That we would have eternal life, walking with Him in peace in the Garden of Paradise again is the Assumption of Mary. She was the first Christian the first to believe, she gave her flesh and blood to Jesus who Ascended to Heaven - so she is Assumed, that is taken up body and soul into Heaven by Jesus. She believed in Him, she said "No" to sin and "Yes" to doing God's will so that it would be fulfilled, so Jesus would be with us to redeem us. She not only said Yes to God's will but told us as her last words in the Gospels at the Wedding feast of Cana, "Do whatever He tells you to do," so that God's will and original plan will be fulfilled also in us - if we believe in Him and unite ourselves, body and soul, to Him doing God's will as Mary did. Mary not only gave her body and blood to Jesus, but she received it herself as she was at, not only the Last Supper when Jesus for the first time changed bread and wine into His Body and Blood and told us to eat and drink, but at many Masses after that by the Apostles and especially St. John who took her into his home - until the time of her earthly life was over - uniting her flesh and blood with His in the Eucharist, so she, as Jesus promised, would have eternal life and not die. "I am the living bread that came down from Heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world."

The promise of Jesus is shown to us fulfilled in Mary, the first Christian. God's plan for us is that if we accept doing God's will in our choices and actions as Mary did, and if we unite our flesh and blood with that of Jesus in the Eucharist, and if we give Jesus flesh and blood in our lives - by being Jesus in our words and actions to the others around us, that the plan of God will be realized for us too. As with Mary: Death is destroyed, eternal life is given, and the new Garden of Heaven is open up for us to dwell with God forever. And when the desert of this world is past, like Mary, our bodies will reunite with our souls to be with God in joy forever in Heaven as God originally planned for us.