



The Bond Between a Mother and a Child

ST. JOSEPH'S HIGHGATE

2020 August 16

The Bond Between a Mother and a Child

Today marks the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. We call it the Assumption while the Eastern Orthodox call it the Dormition. They deal with the same event but the interpretation is a bit different. Patrick Comerford offers the following distinction:

The Orthodox Church teaches that Mary died a natural death, like any human being; that her soul was received by Christ upon death; and that her body was resurrected on the third day after her burial, at which time she was taken up, bodily only, into heaven, so that her tomb was found empty on the third day.

On the other hand, we believe Mary was “assumed” into heaven in bodily form. Some theologians agree with the Orthodox that this happened after her death, while others hold that she did not experience death. In his dogmatic definition of the Assumption in *Munificentissimus Deus* (1950), Pope Pius XII deliberately left open the question of whether Mary died before her Assumption.

There are some beautiful stories and prayers from the Tradition related to this great feast day. By one account Mary prayed to her Son that he would let her know three days before she was to die. Christ granted her request on a Friday while Mary prayed on the Mount of Olives, a place she frequently visited. On this day the Archangel Gabriel came with a message from Jesus saying, "He calls thee unto Him, to His Kingdom, to His ineffable glory, that thou might sit at the right hand of His throne. He awaiteth thee. Therefore, do not be troubled over these words." Then Mary offered the following prayer:

"I would not have been worthy to receive Thee, O Lord, into my womb, unless Thou Thyself had mercy on me, Thy slave. I kept the treasure entrusted to me and, therefore, I have the boldness to ask Thee, O King of glory, to protect me from the power of Gehenna. If heaven and the angels tremble before Thee, how much more man, made of dust, who has nothing good of his own except what he has been given by Thy goodness. Thou, O Lord, art God, blessed forever."

It is said that she knelt to pray this. When she did the olive trees on the Mount of Olives bowed down. When she arose the trees straightened. "Thus, even trees

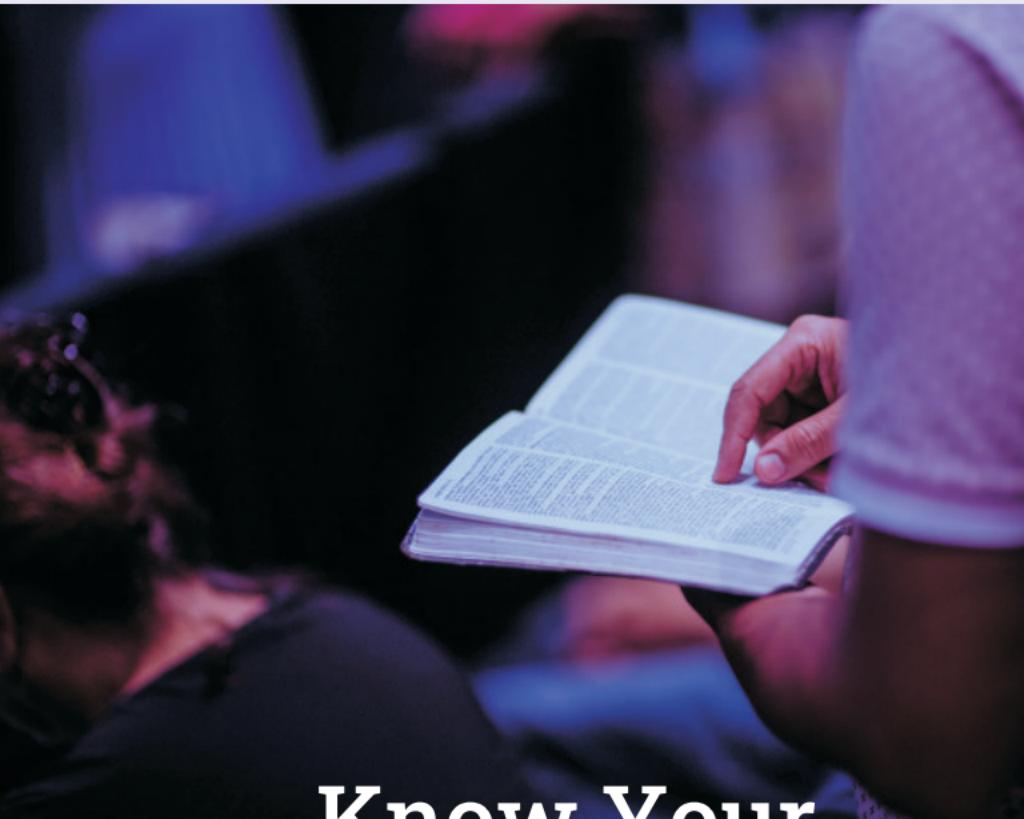


revered and honoured the Lady and Mistress of the universe."

Mary returned home and prepared for her repose. The faithful gathered around her. She made a will leaving her two garments to two poor widows who had faithfully served her. Following a loud clap of thunder the apostles, scattered to the ends of the earth, were brought to the house on clouds by the angels of God. Celebration, joy, prayers, and praise ensued.

On August 15 about the third hour (9:00 a.m) her Son, with angels and archangels and all the heavenly powers, appeared. Beautiful prayers filled the room. "The Lord stretched forth His undefiled hands and received her holy and blameless soul. She felt no pain whatsoever, but it was as if she had fallen into a sweet sleep. He Whom she conceived without destroying her virginity and bore without pain, now received her soul from her pure body."

*Our God of Mercy,
We confess that our greatest struggle in our spiritual journey is self-rejection...
We reject ourselves when we fail
We reject ourselves when we make mistakes
We reject ourselves when we feel we do not measure up
We reject ourselves when we stray from living in Your way
We reject ourselves out of shame and guilt
We reject our own gifts and potential
We reject the mercy You so graciously offer us.
God of Mercy, we receive Your grace that welcomes and forgives us. Help us to offer grace to the rejected parts of our own selves.
That we may experience the Blessings of Assumption. Amen.*



Know Your Parish

Responsibility for the parish mission belongs to everyone, but each has a role to play.

The document emphasizes the co-responsibility of clergy, religious, and laity for the mission of the parish in the world. But the document also emphasizes that each person work for the Kingdom in the role to which he is called by baptism and vocation.

The guidelines emphasize that the parish pastor is entrusted with the full “care of souls” in the parish, a role unique to priests.

The document acknowledges a canonical

provision that allows lay people to be entrusted with pastoral care in a parish because of a shortage of priests, but emphasizes that such a situation should be rare, and “a temporary and not a permanent measure,” that can only be used when there is a true lack of priests.

“We are dealing here with an extraordinary form of entrusting pastoral care, due to the impossibility of appointing a Parish Priest or a Parish Administrator, which is not to be confused with the ordinary active cooperation of the lay faithful in assuming their responsibilities.”

“Furthermore, it would be preferable to appoint one or more deacons over consecrated men and women or laypersons for directing this kind of pastoral care,” the guidelines suggest.

The document takes care to urge against the “clericalization of the laity” so frequently warned about by Pope Francis, in which laity are urged to take up roles more typically occupied by priests.

At the same, the document says that laity are called to give their lives to the mission of the Gospel and the work of the Church.

Laity are called “to make a generous commitment to the service of the mission of evangelisation, first of all through the

general witness of their daily lives, lived in conformity with the Gospel, in whatever environment they are in and at every level of responsibility; in a particular way, they are called to place themselves at the service of the Parish community.”

The guidelines also encourage a vision of deacons as ministers of service, rather than as assistants to parish priests, and of religious men and women as contributors to the evangelizing mission of a parish through the witness of their religious consecration.

“Outgoing dynamism.”

The guidelines conclude with a call for “outgoing dynamism” that directs parishes toward an evangelizing mission, the task of the entire People of God, that walks through history as the “family of God” and that, in the synergy of its diverse members, labours for the growth of the entire ecclesial body.

It urges that “the Parish might rediscover itself as a fundamental place of evangelical proclamation, of the celebration of the Eucharist, a place of fraternity and charity, from which Christian witness can shine for the world.”

By JD Flynn

Denver Newsroom, Jul 20, 2020 (CNA)

"I ABSOLVE YOU.
YOU'RE FORGIVEN."



I was recently thinking about the power of forgiveness, something our society seems to be unawares of alongside many other Christian values. A real shame, because the ability to forgive ourselves and others, and other Christian values such as tolerance and respect for all human beings, make us richer from a human point of view, and probably happier too. A society unable to see the preciousness of life, and to be merciful towards oneself and others, is likely to be poorer and unfulfilled.

I cannot offer a theological analysis of the act of forgiveness as my religious knowledge is too limited, however, I would say that in order to be forgiven we need to ask for it, acknowledging our sin, and determining not to do it again. Of course, we are human and despite our best intentions we're likely to sin again (Jesus says, 'forgive seven times seven', the number seven representing 'completeness/perfection' in the Bible – source: Wikipedia). It is indeed reassuring that God's immense love will always be there for us, unconditionally, ready to welcome his repentant children back to Him with open arms.

Probably, a materialistic society like the one we live in, finds it difficult to accept the idea of 'God's unconditional love': in order to receive something we're always

expected to give something first – nothing comes for 'free'. But once again the Christian vision goes refreshingly against the prevailing mentality since God gives us without expecting anything back. As above, his love for us is total, perfect – no small print attached.

I think that in order to be forgiven, we also need to be willing to accept forgiveness. Contrary to what we may think, this isn't always easy as it involves acknowledging that we don't have the ability or strength to 'manage our lives on our own', and that we need God's help in order to overcome our weaknesses. Moreover, asking for forgiveness, clearly implies that we are responsible for our actions since we acknowledge that we have done something wrong. Many people who aren't Christian might think that the ability to ask for the forgiveness of our sins and to get it fully from God is an easy way out, but on the contrary, it helps us see what we have done wrong, think about it, and try not to repeat our error.

In fact, God's forgiveness and our acceptance of it, is an important part of our spiritual/ human growth as we are given the chance to improve our behaviour and to leave what we have done wrong behind us, for good.

Martha Halford-Fumagalli



Search for Mary

Draw back the curtains
Of your mind,
Brighten the light
Within you,
Begin a journey
Into mystery
The mystery of Mary.
Do not search for her
Across the centuries,
Bring her into focus,
To where you're
Standing now.
Befriend her,
Sit with her,
She's human too
And then before your eyes
See her chosen,
Visited, raised.

Take a leap
In pure imagination,
In childlike assent,
And span a truth
With wings of faith.
Do not feel an absence;
Know she's walking
Down the paths of time,
Back from the utmost
Bounds of privilege
To stop with you
And be your life link
With God.

Marian Thérèse Burke, SUSC



GIVE

**ST. JOSEPH'S MISSION IS
SUSTAINED BY THE
GRACE OF GOD
AND THE FAITHFULNESS
OF PEOPLE LIKE YOU.**

We are here because of your generosity.

Yes, we need your support.

We prayerfully invite you to visit our website and the portal

'Donate to Our Parish'



and use E-Giving through **Gift Aid and Standing Orders** to set up a recurring donation or make a one-time gift.

It is a way to express gratitude and a beautiful way to say thank you.

BOOKING YOUR PLACE AT MASS

Booking a place is easy! Please click on the following link and choose a Mass time:

[https://parish.rcdow.org.uk
/highgate/events/](https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/highgate/events/)



A link is also available via the parish website.

Christian Stewardship

Last week's collection amounted to £520. In addition to that we receive an average of over £900 per week in standing orders. Thank you very much for your continuing generosity in support of your Parish.



Face Coverings



Face coverings will be mandatory in Places of Worship from Saturday 8th August 2020. All those who are attending churches must wear a face covering unless they are exempt from doing so. This is for the good of all who gather in the Church for Mass as it is an enclosed public space where there are people from differing households who they do not normally meet.

P R A Y

+ Miss Consuelo Neira
+ Bartholomew Theodore
+ Agnes Marchessou
+ Michael Kennedy



St Joseph's Church,
Highgate Hill, London N19 5NE
Tel. 020 7272 2320
e-mail: joseph.highgate@gmail.com
Fr. George (gaskoloth@hotmail.com)