

First reading Revelation 11:19. 12: 1-6, 10

‘A woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet.’

God’s temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple.

And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. She was pregnant and was crying out in birth pains and the agony of giving birth. And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems. His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she bore her child he might devour it. She gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to his throne, and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God. And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, ‘Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come.’

Responsorial Psalm 45(44): 10-12, 16. R10

On your right stands the queen in gold of Ophir.

The daughters of kings are those whom you favour.

On your right stands the queen in gold of Ophir.

Listen, O daughter; pay heed and give ear:
forget your own people and your father’s house.

So will the king desire your beauty.
He is your lord, pay homage to him.

They are escorted amid gladness and joy;
they pass within the palace of the king.

Second reading 1 Corinthians 15:20-27

‘Christ the first fruits, then those who belong to Christ.’

Brothers and Sisters: Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For ‘God has put all things in subjection under his feet.’

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia.

Mary has been taken up into heaven;
the host of angels rejoice.

Alleluia.

Gospel Luke 1: 39-56

‘He who is mighty has done great things for me; he has exalted those of humble estate.’

In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and she exclaimed with a loud cry, ‘Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.’

And Mary said,

‘My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant.

For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring for ever.’

And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home.

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Feast days this week

Wednesday 12th August: St John Eudes

Thursday 20th August: St Bernard

Friday 21st August: St Pius X

Saturday 22nd August: Our Lady, Mother and Queen

The Cycle of Prayer

A Deeper Understanding between Christians and Jews

Prayer

*Let us pray also for the Jewish people,
to who the Lord our God spoke first,
that he may grant them to advance in love of his name
and in faithfulness to his covenant.*

*Almighty ever-living God,
who bestowed your promises on Abraham and his
descendants,
graciously hear the prayers of your Church,
that the people you first made your own
may attain the fullness of redemption.*

The fairest of creatures

Every individual of the human race, male and female, is made in the image and likeness of God. (Genesis 1:26). We can celebrate Our Lady's Assumption in light of this basic principle from the creation story.

Mostly we are tempted to reverse this process and try to shape God in our own image and likeness.

Naturally we have a limited concept of our Creator. How we cling to the notion of a docile God, who will grant our wishes if only we ask him in the right way; or an indulgent God who will turn a blind eye on the double standards in our lives; or a vengeful God, whom we obey only out of fear. To test the quality of our faith we might wonder, Do my ideas resemble Mary's vision of God, especially as in today's gospel when she says, "My soul glorifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour."

Mary combines sincere worship of God with deep joy in his presence, in the spirit of the advice given to the early Christians, "Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing" (1 Thess 5:17). In her Magnificat, Mary is enraptured by God, she does not ask anything for herself, she is not worried about the future; she thinks only of the goodness of God up to the present moment, and of the gratitude she owes to God. In her we have the supreme example of someone totally captivated by the love of God. In this sense, she is the fairest of all God's creatures.

First of all the saints, she is the handmaid, the willing and joyful servant of the Lord. She lived solely for God and therefore God, who cannot be outdone in generosity, gave her the fullness of grace. Now just as Jesus did not abandon us when he ascended to heaven, so Mary has not been separated from the Christian community by her Assumption, but remains for each of us a sign of hope. We are called, like her, to share in the fullness of Christ's glory. She is the model and guarantee of all that the believer hopes to become in heaven. We pray today that we too may be found worthy to come to that place in heaven which God has prepared for those who love him. associationofcatholicpriests.ie