



Assumption of Mary

August 15 is the solemnity of the Assumption of Mary. In the United States, it is a holy day of obligation (in years when it does not fall on a Monday).

What is the Assumption of Mary, how did it come to be defined, and what relevance does it have for our lives? Here are a few things to know and share...

1) What is the Assumption of Mary?

The Assumption of Mary is the teaching that the Immaculate Mother of God, the ever Virgin Mary, having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory.

2) What level of authority does this teaching have?

This teaching was infallibly defined by Pope Pius XII on November 1, 1950 in the bull *Munificentissimus Deus* (Latin, "Most Bountiful God").

3) Did Mary die if she was free from Original Sin and its stain?

Being free of Original Sin and its stain is not the same thing as being in a glorified, deathless condition. Jesus was also free of Original Sin and its stain, but he could—and did—die. Expressing a common view among theologians, Ludwig Ott writes:

For Mary, death, in consequence of her freedom from original sin and from personal sin, was not a consequence of punishment of sin. However, it seems fitting that Mary's body, which was by nature mortal, should be, in conformity with that of her Divine Son, subject to the general law of death.

4) What Scriptural basis is there for the teaching?

John Paul II noted: Although the New Testament does not explicitly affirm Mary's Assumption, it offers a basis for it because it strongly emphasized the Blessed Virgin's perfect union with Jesus' destiny. "The woman clothed with the sun" whom John the Apostle contemplated on the Island of Patmos (Rev. 12:1). Another passage is "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you, blessed are you among women" (Luke 1:28), since they saw, in the mystery of the Assumption, the fulfillment of that most perfect grace granted to the Blessed Virgin and the special blessing that countered the curse of Eve.

Source: <http://www.ncregister.com/blog/jimmy-akin/the-assumption-of-mary-12-things-to-know-and-share2>

5) How can we apply this teaching to our everyday lives?

According to Pope Benedict XVI: By contemplating Mary in heavenly glory, we understand that the earth is not the definitive homeland for us either, and that if we live with our gaze fixed on eternal goods we will one day share in this same glory.