

SUNDAY MASS

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:

A great sign appeared in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon beneath her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars.

FIRST READING: Revelation 11:19; 12:1-6,10.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 45.

RESPONSE:

On your right stands the queen in gold of Ophir.

1. The daughters of kings are those whom you favour. On your right stands the queen in gold of Ophir. **R**
2. Listen, O daughter; pay heed and give ear; forget your own people and your father's house. **R**
3. So will the king desire your beauty. He is your lord, pay homage to him. **R**
4. They are escorted amid gladness and joy; they pass within the palace of the king. **R**

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 15:20-27.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

Alleluia, alleluia! Mary has been taken up into heaven; the host of angels rejoices. Alleluia.

GOSPEL: Luke 1:39-56.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON:

All generations will call me blessed, for he who is mighty has done great things for me.

THE WEEK AHEAD

Live the Word

Mon 16 Aug (St Stephen of Hungary)

Judges 2:11-19; Psalm 106; Matthew 19:16-22

What possessions get in the way of living our faith more completely, more generously? The sincerity of the young man in today's gospel also shows us that our faith entails obligations. "What good must I do...?"

Tue 17 Aug Liturgy of the Day

Judges 6:11-24; Psalm 85; Matthew 19:23-30

The Lord invites us all to follow and, through him, receive the promise of eternal life. By ourselves, we can never be holy enough. With him, all things are possible for each and every one of us.

Wed 18 Aug (Bl. Victoria Rasoamanarivo)

Judges 9:6-15; Psalm 21; Matthew 20:1-16

It is so much easier to point a finger at our leaders (in church and society) than to reflect on how conscious and active I am in lessening the injuries of poverty and racism affecting those around me.

Thu 19 Aug (St John Eudes, Pr)

Judges 11:29-39; Psalm 40; Matthew 22:1-14

We all love to be in control. But ironically, it is only when we stop resisting God, stop trying to make things work by doing them our way, that it becomes better for us. It becomes easier.

Fri 20 Aug St Bernard, AbD

Ruth 1:1.3-6.14-16.22; Psalm 146; Matthew 22:34-40

Ruth, a foreigner, is met with prejudice and hatred when returning to Judah. How open are we to welcoming others into our midst, whether they be new neighbours, in-laws – or even foreigners!

Sat 21 Aug St Pius X, P

Ruth 2:1-3.8-11; 4:13-17; Psalm 128; Matthew 23:1-12

God's love and generosity is essentially unfair. It is gratuitous, bounteous, magnanimous. *Extravagant God, help me to lavish my love upon others today – especially upon those who seem undeserving.*

Sun 22 Aug 21ST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Joshua 24:1-2.15-18; Psalm 34; John 6:60-69

True discipleship, following Christ in today's world, means that everything we do, we do out of love. Imagine that! Reflect on how you can make this possible for one day, even for one hour.

(KEY: SOLEMNITY; FEAST; Memorial; (Optional Memorial) Pr=Priest; Ab=Abbot; D=Doctor; P=Pope)

Catholic Link

THE ASSUMPTION OF MARY

Assumption of Our Lady • Year B
Divine Office: Week IV • 15 August 2021

Hope in a Time of Suffering

On the Feast of the Assumption the Church reflects on a wonderful passage from the Book of Revelation, also known as the Book of the Apocalypse. A little background to the purpose of the final book of the Christian Bible would help us to appreciate it better. It is full of strange visions like dragons, beasts and bleeding lambs, not to mention the complexity of numbers like 666; 40; 7 and 144,000. Revelations has been misused by Christian fanatics and fundamentalists to prove almost anything, e.g., that 666 refers to the Pope as the anti-Christ; that the "beast" is Communism (or whoever you want it to be) and that the various numbers are codes to calculate the date of the end of the world.

However, and less melodramatically, the Book of Revelation is simply about the persecution and suffering of early Christians in the Roman Empire, written to give them encouragement. Christians were imprisoned, tortured and martyred. The writer uses powerful images to move his readers from despair to hope, from fear to courage. The images show that God is in control of history, that Jesus is alive and strong, and that evil will never ultimately win.

With this background insight we approach the passage about the struggle between the pregnant woman and the dragon. The Book of Genesis already prophesied that the victory would be the woman's and her descendants, and that the serpent would have its head crushed.

The woman in the story who cries aloud in the

pangs of childbirth is *Eve*, the first woman and our first mother. She represents all of humanity as we struggle to defend life against the menace of death. The woman also symbolises the *Church, our Mother*, bringing new birth through Baptism. And the woman also symbolises *Mary*, the Mother of Jesus, the "New Eve" and "Mother of the Church".



Detail of a stained glass window in the parish church of St Mary the Virgin, Henley on Thames, Oxfordshire, England.

The dragon is the power of evil and death who confronts the woman, ready to devour the child as soon as it is born. It is a totally unfair struggle. A woman and a baby against a powerful dragon. But this is the situation of humanity down the ages: life threatened with death as soon as it is born.

But God takes a stand against death. God defends the child and the woman. The child is born and taken straight to God. The child is Jesus. He is born, lives, dies, rises from the dead, and receives from God the power to rule. The woman is also freed from the threat of the dragon. The victory is won. The resurrection is a reality. Mary participates fully in it and as her children we can share in it. The Assumption of Mary is about God's being true to God's promises: to Noah, to Abraham, to Moses, to Jesus... and to us. Mary herself proclaimed: "He has come to the help of his servant, according to His promise..." The promise is fulfilled!

As the Book of Revelation gave courage to early Christians in the face of suffering and death, may it give us hope in a time of Covid-19. Good triumphs over evil, life over death. Mary Assumed into Heaven, pray for us!

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Join Catholic Link

on Saturday 21
August at 4 pm

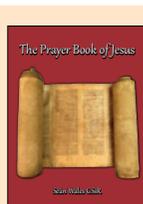
in a Zoom conversation
with Fr Sean Wales CSSr

who talks to us
about his book
on the psalms entitled

"The Prayer Book of Jesus"



For Zoom invitations
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