

The Assumption of Mary 2008

Luke 1:39-56

It can be tempting, on certain feasts of Mary,

to be somewhat cynical when the same gospel always seems to be used...

Here we go again: the Annunciation.

It is true that there are not many gospel passages that speak of Mary.

Could it be that she is God's secret?

And, can we perhaps safely presume that, in this gospel, we are given what we need to discover something of the particular mystery that we celebrate?

We celebrate the mystery of the *Assumption of Mary*.

It is a mystery: none of us gets it!

But, recall that "mystery" does not mean distant.

We can and ought to draw close to Jesus as He loves Mary in this way.

We ought to draw close in faith, hope, and love.

Do not try to envision it.

The Assumption is not the same erroneous vision that we have of Jesus in the Ascension:
a huge vacuum sucking Mary into the clouds.

The Church came to believe in the Assumption over time,
as it took time to grasp who Mary is.

Mary: hidden woman, subtle sister, perfectly seized by divine love, and thus without sin,
i.e. without any obstacles to love.

The Church came to realize that it was only "normal", only fitting, that Mary, given

- such love
- her perfect oneness with J,

be taken up body and soul into the glory of heaven.

It is

- a singular privilege
- a singular participation
in Christ's resurrection and ascension
(about which we read in 2nd reading (I Corinthians 15:20-27):
"in Christ shall all be brought to life".

It is all about divine love taking hold.

Divine love has taken hold of Mary with particular completeness, i.e. including her body.

Hence, our 1st reading, the Book of Revelation (12:1):

"A woman clothed with the sun...with a crown of twelve stars."

Mary herself speaks of her blessing.

“All generations will call me blessed.”

She uttered her words in faith, of course, not knowing *how* she would be blessed.

She only knew *that* she was blessed.

Now, on a good day, we perhaps admire this from afar.

It is not meant to be admired from afar.

Why? Because

- Mary is given to us.
- what is given to Mary is given to us.

We are her children, and her brothers and sisters.

A mother gives everything to her child.

When one member of the Body is blessed, all the members are blessed.

We are to admire this *from within*.

We participate, in faith and in hope, in the Assumption.

We are joined to Mary, we who are joined to Jesus.

If she is “in heaven”, then we, insofar as we are joined to her, are in heaven.

Well, our hearts, in a real sense, are in heaven.

Because of the Assumption heaven is more present in our midst.

As the Second Vatican Council so beautifully stated,

“The Mother of Jesus (Mary) in the glory which she possesses in body and soul in heaven, is the beginning of the Church (i.e. you and me!) *as it is to be perfected* in the world to come (i.e. the *perfection* of divine love has begun!). She therefore stands as a sign of *certain* hope and comfort to the pilgrim People of God.”