

A READING FROM THE FIRST BOOK OF REVELATION

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.'

THE WORD OF THE LORD

THE RESPONSE TO THE PSALM IS

Ps 45(44):10. 11. 12. 16. R10b

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.

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.

On your right stands the queen in gold of Ophir.

So will the king desire your beauty.

He is your lord, pay homage to him.

On your right stands the queen in gold of Ophir.

They are escorted amid gladness and joy;

they pass within the palace of the king.

On your right stands the queen in gold of Ophir.

A READING FROM THE FIRST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS

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.'

THE WORD OF THE LORD

THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION .

Alleluia, alleluia.

Mary has been taken up into heaven;

the host of angels rejoice.

Alleluia.

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A READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING
TO LUKE

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.

REFLECTION ON THE READINGS

I struggled with the idea of the Assumption, weren't we all to be resurrected from the dead, why was Mary's so special? The unique closeness she had with him, forming his body in the womb, helping him develop as a child and growing as an adult. Her Immaculate heart free from sin from her Immaculate conception, enabled her to be united Spiritually as well as the physical relationship of Mother to Son.

This was not always an easy privilege as the 4th Station of the cross makes us fully aware. At the Franciscan centre in Godalming, the outdoor stations of the Cross contains the tragic image of Mary by her Son's side as he has fallen the first time, attempting to lift him and his cross back to his feet. She suffered unimaginably as she did not know the Son of God was fulfilling the Father's will.

Mary followed him in his mission, their family members surprised at his total commitment to his Father's will revealed at his Baptism when they might expect him to stay at his home town. Mary was an active member of the community of the apostles and was with such respect included enough to pray with them as they gathered in the upper room awaiting the Holy Spirit. Her pure and immaculate heart always there with him; so we can say *pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death amen*

Her close union with her Son of prepared her for God's mercy in the world to come. Her Immaculate heart, devoid of the fault of original sin motivated her to focus on her son and to serve him in his mission. A voluntary God's will as also seen in Mary, the sister of Lazarus and the practical Martha.

Their closeness brought them together in the world to come, the Eastern or Orthodox icon of the Dormition as they call it shows Mary as an infant clothed in swaddling clothes, reversing the tradition idea of Mary holding the infant Jesus. This icon will be displayed in the sanctuary today.

We venerate her because as Mother of the Son of God and intercessor for us. Her concern with Social Justice echoes the Prophet Isaiah and echoes the hope of the people of God, She shares the hope of all God's people.