

*In Nomine Jesu*

## MOTHER OF GOD

Hear the proclamation of a Gradual that, when used to explain this day to us on this translated Feast of St. Mary, Mother of our Lord, leads us to remember how God chose to fulfill His Promise to His people:

*Again the God will show mercy upon them, and He will return them into the land, and they will build the House, but not like the first, until the times of that aeon is fulfilled; and, after these things, they will return from the (places of their) captivity, and they will build Jerusalem honorably, and the House of God they will build in her (a) building glorious, just as the prophets spoke concerning her.<sup>1</sup>*

### **Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ**

As Mary is the Mother of Jesus, and Jesus is the Son of God, so Mary is the Mother of God! The denial of that testimony was condemned at the ecumenical Council of Ephesus in A.D. 431. That doctrine still stands in the universal Church. That is because the Scriptures provide ample witness to the truth that the pre-incarnate Christ, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity from all ages, in order to save us humans from sin, death and eternal hellfire, took on our flesh in the womb of the Blessed Virgin. He became one with His creatures, though without original sin in Himself (for sin came into Creation through the Fall of Adam (for Eve was deceived)).

Such truths the Feasts of the Annunciation of our Lord (March 25, which some theologians have believed, for centuries, is also the date of Christ's resurrection from the dead), the Nativity, and Epiphany recall to our minds each Church Year. What many in the Church outside of the Roman (and

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<sup>1</sup> *Tobit* 14:5.

Eastern) Churches do not think upon, is that, each Summer we also have Christmas in August! That, of course, follows Christmas in July with the Feast of the Visitation. Our Wednesday Divine Services (and now our Monday and Friday Matins) give this congregation more opportunities to hear the Word, and receive God's gracious gifts on the dates that move through the days of each calendar year.

So, today, in this place, we celebrated the joy that Jesus' cousin experienced in the womb of his aged mother as he heard the greeting of Mary, the Mother of our Lord. This Feast is one that the Roman Church celebrates as the Assumption of Mary into heaven. Though we have chosen to adorn the Altar Table and Pastor with heavenly blue, we cannot hold to legends outside of Scripture that became doctrine in erring confessions of the Faith.

Namely, we reject the teaching that a St. Anne, by the Holy Spirit's infusion of a soul into Mary's infant body in her womb, bore a girl who was *was preserved by Him from all taint of original sin.*<sup>2</sup> We also reject the doctrine that, due to her innocent state at death, St. Mary the Mother of our Lord was assumed into heaven with no taint of corruption. This was declared to be true in a bull of November 4, 1950, some 1,900 years after her death:

*By the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, by that of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, and by our own authority, We pronounce, declare and define to be divinely revealed the dogma that the immaculate Mother of God, the Ever-virgin Mary, was on the completion of her earthly life assumed body and soul into the glory of heaven.*<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Thurston, Herbert J. and Attwater, Donald, eds. *Butler's Lives of the Saints*, Volume 3, Allen, Texas: Thomas More Publishing, (1756-9) 1996, 331

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 333.

All of that is ultimately attributed to her good works while she lived on earth. If it were true, that would be wonderful for Mother Mary. But, since that teaching is not in the Scriptures, and is not expounded by the Evangelical Confessions, we, in this place, will follow the Word of the Lord. Therein we find a confession that declares the completion, in Jesus the Christ of the Promise put forth in our opening quote of proclamation for the day. That states:

*Again the God will show mercy upon them, and He will return them into the land, and they will build the House, but not like the first, until the times of that age is fulfilled; and, after these things, they will return from the (places of their) captivity, and they will build Jerusalem honorably, and the House of God they will build in her (a) building glorious, just as the prophets spoke concerning her.<sup>4</sup>*

You likely noted the phrase “until the times of that age is fulfilled; and after these things,” in the middle of that quote. That might have bridged, in your heart and mind, to this Scripture for the day:

*And when it came, the fulness of time, God sent forth His Son, born from woman, born under Law, that the ones under Law might be lead out, that the adoption as sons we might receive.<sup>5</sup>*

In the fulness of time, the construction of Herod’s Temple began on Temple Mount. As the workers labored, God, Whose Presence once filled Solomon’s Temple, was prepared again to enter into the midst of His people. He chose, to fulfill His Promise given to our first parents through the eternal curse God pronounced upon the Father of Lies, the Tempter of Man, the Great Deceiver, God chose to come in our flesh. His was the Immaculate Conception. He was the One conceived and born without sin in Himself.

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<sup>4</sup> *Tobit* 14:5.

<sup>5</sup> *Galatians* 4:4.

It is Jesus, that Son of Mary, whom we celebrate this day. As the Church Year has revealed each year for centuries, Jesus alone fulfilled the Promise of the ages. In the first half of the year, the Festival Half, we hear of Him being placed under the Law (the Eve of the Name of Jesus and the Circumcision of our Lord). We hear of Him being washed in the sins of all humans for all time as He who was without sin had the sin-filled waters of the Jordan River flow over Him (The Feast of the Baptism of our Lord). We hear of Jesus giving the command with a blessing – to make disciples by baptizing and teaching them all He commanded (The Feast of the Ascension). We learn throughout the entire Church Year of the Great Exchange He came to make – He takes on Himself our sins and we are given His righteousness (we are declared holy in Christ, and thus right with the Father in Jesus). That, and so much more, should cause us to respond as infant John, and his Mother, did –

*and it happened, as Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, leaped the infant in her womb; and she was filled with the Holy Spirit, Elizabeth, and she called out greatly, and she said:*

*Blessed are you among women,  
And blessed (is) the fruit of your womb.*

*And how is it to me that the Mother of the Lord of me has come to me?<sup>6</sup>*

So, after all that, is this commemoration day about Mother Mary?

Yes, for she too is one for whom her Son, Christ Jesus, was crucified, died, rose from the dead and ascended into the heavens. It is also a day for all the saints, living now in the flesh, and living in Christ on the other side of the Altar. For this is truly a commemoration day for the Church in heaven and on

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<sup>6</sup> Luke 1:41-42

earth to rejoice on account of the record of an en-wombed infant John leaping in the womb at the greeting of the Mother of his, and our, Savior!

**The peace which passes all understanding guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus**

St. Mary, Mother of our Lord (LSB One-Year Series)

Psalm 45; Isaiah 61:7-11; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 1:39-55

August 14, 2019

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*Soli Deo Gloria*

**Notes:**

*Again He will show mercy upon them, the God, and He will return them to the land, and they will build the House, not like the first, until the times of the aeons are fulfilled. And, after these things, they will return from the captivities, and they will build Jerusalem honorably, and the House of God in her they will build, (a) building glorious, just as they spoke concerning her, the prophets.<sup>7</sup>*

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<sup>7</sup> Tobit 14:5.