



August 15, 2010

The Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

“Christ has been raised from the dead the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.” 1 Cor 15:20

“My being proclaims the greatness of the Lord.” Luke 1:46

Dear Friends;

Do you listen to your gut? Has your heart ever been in your throat in the presence of your beloved? Do you learn through your eyes, ears or touch? Do you listen to your body talk to you—when its time to eat, rest, diet, to embrace another, or cry out against injustice? In many ways we are our bodies. What happens to us especially our bodies when we die?

Christians place their hope in the resurrection of Christ. Christ has preceded us in resurrection and will as St. Paul tells us raise all who belong to him. For Jews like St. Paul it is inconceivable to have a disembodied humanity. Without bodies we are not human. We are embodied spirit. There is no separating them out both make us human. Resurrection is about a restored and divinized humanity.

Paul speculates what a resurrected body will be like. He speaks of a glorified, transformed, spiritual and bodies that will not die. These new bodies will bear the image of Christ who preceded us in resurrection.

Today’s feast emphasizes the importance of the body. In the Gospel reading from Luke we can see that God uses the body as a vehicle for grace. Two pregnant women, Mary and Elizabeth, exemplify the Divine taking flesh in humanity. God’s action is known through there bodies. The baby in Elizabeth leaps for joy in her womb as she sees Mary. Elizabeth proclaims a blessing on both Mary and her child.

In response with her whole “being,” Mary proclaims the Gospel—the Good News—of the coming age of God’s reign. This reign will transform the world and there will no longer be hungry or exploited bodies. Mary does this by sharing her own body giving flesh to the Christ.

In the Scriptures there were holy people who were taken up into heaven: Enoch (Genesis 5:24), Moses (Jude 9) and Elijah (2 Kings 2:1-12). For centuries Christians both in the East (Eastern Orthodox) and the West (Catholic) had considered like these Mary also deserved special attention from God. In 1950 Pope Pius XII after consultation of the world’s bishops and the faithful, infallibly declared the Assumption of Mary as Catholic dogma.

Catholic Christianity stresses the importance of our embodied humanity. It is through the body of Mary that God’s Son is able to become human. And through him our humanity becomes infused with the Divine Spirit. Like in Mary, the Christ continues to become flesh—human—in our bodies. When we hear the Word and embody it; when we eat and drink and are nourished by the Body and Blood of Christ we are transformed.

Mary, “having completed the course of her earthly life was assumed body and soul (*fully human*) into heavenly glory.”—Pius XII *Munificentissimus Deus no. 44*. Jesus the first of the harvest is followed by Mary. One day we like Mary will also be raised up fully human to bask in God’s everlasting goodness.

Today it is tradition on this feast of Mary’s harvest into heaven to bless the crops for harvest. We will bless ours today. Our harvest has been rich this year we have taken over 2800 lbs of produce to distribute through St. Vincent de Paul Society. Thanks to the Garden ministry and the society for feeding all the hungry bodies in our community.

Peace,

Fr Ron