

- In these languid days of August, as summer vacation is winding down and preparations for the industry Autumn necessarily brings is gearing up, Holy Mother Church calls us today to a day of meditation on the Blessed Virgin Mary.
- As Catholics, there are 4 dogmas that we must believe about our blessed Lady: that she is the Mother of God, that she is perpetually a virgin, that she was immaculately conceived, and that at the end of her earthly life, she was assumed body and soul into Heaven.
- Because she lived so sinlessly as she did, Mary was not condemned to the corruption of the grave – as will be the fate of the rest of us.
- Indeed, as St. Germanus said of Mary:

Your virginal body is entirely holy, entirely chaste, entirely the house of God, so that for this reason also it is henceforth a stranger to decay, a body changed . . . to a preeminent life of incorruptibility, but still a living body, excelling in splendor, a body inviolate and sharing in the perfection of life.

- Whereas the dogma of her divine motherhood, which we celebrate on January 1st, is the primary Marian dogma that underlies and necessitates the other 3, today's dogma of her glorious Assumption is the crowning dogma – the fitting result and necessary end of Mary being the Mother of God, of maintaining her virginity, and of being immaculately conceived.
- But in addition to meditating upon her death and glorious assumption into Heaven, in a more general sense, we're called today to meditate on Our Lady's glory.
- Echoing our Lord's own Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven, today's feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary and next week's feast of her Coronation, give us a glimpse of the particular and unique glory possessed by our Lady.
- Indeed, Mary's glory is of such magnitude that no clothing on earth can satisfactorily befit her, and thus she must be clothed with the sun; no throne on earth can properly bear her, and so she must have the moon as her throne; and no earthly jewelry can adequately adorn her, and so she must be crowned with the stars.
- Her's is a glory that far surpasses that of the angels and all the saints combined, among whom she shines like the sun.
- And it's for this reason that today is the day that we, here at St. Ann's, consecrate ourselves to Our Lady after 33 days of preparation. We do so with the hope of one day sharing in her glory in Heaven.
- For when we give ourselves to her fully and consecrate ourselves to her as her children, Mary covers us with her mantle, enriching us with grace and interceding for us before God.
- Indeed, all of us are sinners and therefore will stand as beggars before the Lord, pleading for His mercy. But when we've consecrated ourselves to Mary in this life, then she stands with us in the next life as we approach her Son in judgment.
- When we give her all our merits, good works, and supplications in this life, then she shares with us and covers us with her merits and supplications in the next life.
- Of course, there are *avant-garde* theologians who state that devotion to Our Lady is not strictly necessary for salvation, but I tell you today their theological position is both prideful and dangerous.

- So many of our saints tell us that the greatest sign of predestination is Marian devotion. In other words, if you want to go to Heaven, then you need to be serious about your devotion to Our Lady here on earth!
- And there is no better way to show your devotion to Our Lady than by consecrating yourself to her, and renewing that consecration every year.
- Brothers and sisters, today we get to bask in the glory of the immaculate and ever-virgin Mother of God as we contemplate her assumption into Heaven.
- May we entrust ourselves to her fully in this life with absolute confidence that she will help us attain the glory of heaven when our life on earth comes to its end.
- Our Lady Assumed into Heaven, pray for us.