

## **The Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

**My Dear Brothers and Sisters,**

Let us reflect on our Gospel reading for today to understand why we honor Mary as our Blessed Mother.

Mary, a young woman facing many challenges of her own, went to care for her cousin Elizabeth, who was also expecting a child late in life. Mary didn't focus on herself but on Elizabeth's needs and on all the wonderful things that God has done and will continue to do.

Mary's soul rejoices because **"God has looked with favor on his lowly servant,"** because **"He has mercy on those who fear him,"** because **"He has filled the hungry with good things,"** and because **"He has remembered his promise of mercy."** It is all about God and what He has done. God deserves all the praise. This is what Mary teaches us in today's Gospel reading.

When we think that the Mass should primarily please us instead of pleasing God, we are placing ourselves at the center. When we believe we know better than the Bible and over two thousand years of Christian tradition, we are placing ourselves at the center.

Who did Mary put at the center? She said in today's Gospel that **"God has cast down the mighty from their thrones,"** and that **"God has sent the rich away empty."** It is God who is at the center of Mary's life and prayer. The only thing she mentions that focuses on her is that **"from this day all generations will call me blessed."** And why will all

generations call her blessed? It is because **“the Almighty has done great things for Mary and holy is his Name.”** And this is what we do – we call Mary our Blessed Mother. She is blessed because she is the model of the Church and the first disciple of Jesus.

Today, we celebrate the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into heaven. We believe that because Mary was so focused on putting God at the center of her life, because she was without sin and the Mother of God, she was taken body and soul into heaven, just as all those who die in Christ will be raised on the last day. Where she has gone, we too hope to follow.

**My Dear Brothers and Sisters,**

If we wish to follow Mary, body and soul, into heaven, we must do as she did and put Jesus first in our lives. We need to focus on Jesus, not on ourselves, our wants, and our desires. **Amen.**