

Pope Pius XII's Proclamation on Assumption of Blessed Virgin Mary

MUNIFICENTISSIMUS DEUS

The Apostolic Constitution

By Which is Defined the Dogma of Faith
That Mary, The Virgin Mother of God, Has
Been Assumed Into Heaven in Body and Soul

PIUS, THE BISHOP,

Servant of the Servants of God,

For Everlasting Remembrance

THE MOST BOUNTIFUL GOD, Who is Almighty, the plan of Whose Providence abides in wisdom and love, tempers, in the secret purpose of His own mind the sorrows of peoples and of individual men by means of joys that He interposes in their lives from time to time, in such a way that, under different conditions and in different ways, all things may work together unto good for those who love Him. (1)

Now, just like the present age, Our pontificate is weighed down by ever so many cares, anxieties, and troubles, by reason of very severe calamities that have taken place and by reason of the fact that many have strayed away from truth and virtue. Nevertheless We are greatly consoled to see that, while the Catholic Faith is being professed publicly and vigorously, piety toward the Virgin Mother of God is flourishing and daily growing more fervent, and that almost everywhere on earth it is showing indications of a better and a more holy life.

Thus, while the Blessed Virgin is fulfilling in the most affectionate manner her maternal duties on behalf of those redeemed by the blood of Christ, the minds and the hearts of her children are being vigorously aroused to a more assiduous consideration of her prerogatives.

Actually God, Who from all eternity regards Mary with a most favorable and unique affection has, "when the fulness of time was come," (2) put the plan of His Providence into effect in such a way that all the privileges and prerogatives He had granted to her in His sovereign generosity were to shine forth in her in a kind of perfect harmony. And, although the Church has always recognized this supreme generosity and the perfect harmony of graces and has daily studied them more and more throughout the course of the centuries, still it is in our own age that the privilege of the bodily Assumption into heaven of Mary, the Virgin Mother of God, has certainly stood forth most clearly.

The Immaculate Conception

That privilege has shone forth in new radiance since Our predecessor of immortal memory, Pius IX, solemnly proclaimed the dogma of the revered Mother of God's Immaculate Conception. These two privileges are most closely bound to one another. Christ overcame sin and death by His own death, and the man who is born again in a heavenly way through Baptism has conquered sin and death through Christ Himself. Yet, according to His general rule, God does not will to grant the full effect of the victory over death to the just until the end of time shall have come. And so it is that the bodies of even the just are corrupted, and that "only" on the last day will they be joined, each to its own glorious soul.

Now God has willed that the Blessed Virgin Mary should be exempted from this general rule. She, by an entirely unique privilege, completely overcame sin by her Immaculate Conception, and as a result she was not subject to the law of remaining in the corruption of the grave, and she did not have to wait until the end of time for the redemption of her body.

Thus, when it was solemnly proclaimed that Mary, the Virgin Mother of God, was from the very beginning free from the stain of original sin, the minds of the faithful were filled with a stronger hope that the day might soon come when

TRANSLATION

This English translation of the official Latin text of the Holy Father's proclamation of the dogma of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin was made by the Rev. Dr. Joseph Clifford Fenton, editor of The Ecclesiastical Review and professor of theology at the Catholic University of America.

the dogma of the Virgin Mary's bodily Assumption into heaven would also be defined by the Church's supreme teaching authority.

Actually it was seen that not only individual Catholics, but also those who could speak for nations or ecclesiastical provinces, and even a considerable number of the Fathers of the Vatican Council, urgently petitioned the Apostolic See to this effect.

During the course of time such postulations and petitions did not decrease but rather grew continually in number and in urgency. In this cause there were pious crusades of prayer. Many outstanding theologians eagerly and zealously carried out investigations on this subject either privately or in public ecclesiastical institutions and in other schools where the sacred disciplines are taught.

Marian Congresses, both national and international in scope, have been held in many parts of the Catholic world. These studies and investigations have brought out into even clearer light the fact that the dogma of the Virgin Mary's Assumption into heaven is contained in the deposit of Christian faith entrusted to the Church. They have resulted in many more petitions, begging and urging the Apostolic See that this truth be solemnly defined.

In this pious striving, the faithful have been associated in a wonderful way with their



Historic moment in the 1950 Holy Year shows POPE PIUS XII on the morning of November 1, proclaiming the Assumption of the BLESSED VIRGIN into Heaven a divinely revealed dogma of the Catholic Faith. The Pontiff reads the proclamation seated on a throne before the doors of St. Peter's and under the banner depicting the Virgin Mary's Assumption.

own holy Bishops, who have sent petitions of this kind, truly remarkable in number, to this See of the Blessed Peter. Consequently, when We were elevated to the throne of the supreme pontificate, petitions of this sort had already been addressed by the thousands from every part of the world and from every class of people, from our beloved sons the Cardinals of the Sacred College, the Archbishops and the Bishops, from dioceses and from parishes.

Consequently, while We sent up earnest prayers to God that He might grant to Our mind the light of the Holy Ghost to enable Us to make a decision on this most serious subject, We issued special orders in which We commanded that, by corporate effort, more advanced inquiries into this matter should be begun and that, in the meantime, all the petitions about the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into heaven which had been sent to this Apostolic See from the time of Pius IX, Our predecessor of happy memory, down to our own days should be gathered together and carefully evaluated. (3)

Qualified Bishops

And, since We were dealing with a matter of such great moment and of such importance, We considered it opportune to ask all Our venerable brethren in the episcopate directly and authoritatively that each of them should tell Us what he thought in his own

words. Hence, on May 1, 1946, We gave them Our letter "Deiparae Virginis Mariae," a letter in which these words are contained: "Do you, Venerable Brethren, in your outstanding wisdom and prudence, judge that the bodily Assumption of the Blessed Virgin can be proposed and defined as a dogma of faith? Do you, with your clergy and people, desire that it should be?"

But those whom "the Holy Ghost has placed as bishop to rule the Church of God" (4) gave an almost unanimous affirmative response to both these questions. This "outstanding agreement of the Catholic prelates and the faithful," (5) affirming that the bodily Assumption of God's Mother into heaven can be defined as a dogma of faith, since it shows us the concordant teaching of the Church's ordinary doctrinal authority and the concordant faith of the Christian people which the same doctrinal authority sustains and directs, thus by itself and in an entirely certain and infallible way, manifested this privilege as a truth revealed by God and contained in that divine deposit which Christ has delivered to His Spouse to be guarded faithfully and to be taught infallibly. (6)

Certainly this teaching authority of the Church, not by any merely human effort but

under the protection of the Spirit of Truth, (7) has carried out the commission entrusted to it, that of preserving the revealed truths pure and entire throughout every age, in such a way that it presents them undefiled, adding nothing to them and taking nothing away from them. For, as the Vatican Council teaches, "the Holy Ghost was not promised to the successors of Peter in such a way that, by His revelation, they might manifest new doctrine, but so that, by His assistance, they might guard as sacred and might faithfully propose the revelation delivered through the Apostles, or the deposit of faith." (8)

The Church's Teaching

Thus, from the universal agreement of the Church's ordinary teaching authority we have a certain and firm proof, demonstrating that the Blessed Virgin Mary's bodily Assumption into heaven—which surely no faculty of the human mind could know by its own natural powers, as far as the heavenly glorification of the virginal body of the revered Mother of God is concerned—is a truth that has been revealed by God and consequently something that must be firmly and faithfully believed by all children of the Church. For, as the Vatican Council asserts, "all these things are to be believed by divine and Catholic faith which are contained in the written (Cont. used on Page 26)

Daily Se Boarders H Community

By VINCENT CANN
Boarding Student

As we enter upon the development of reverent devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, the country boys from the country friends of St. Andrew's wondering "What's the routine of the boarder at the Seminary?"

The life of the future boarder at the Seminary is threefold, for it follows the term designated by the in her wisdom to provide for the whole man. It is a life between things supernatural things material through persistence of a fixed plan for the regulation of the student's activities.

This regulation is divided into the fields of spiritual, scholastic endeavors, and recreational activities.

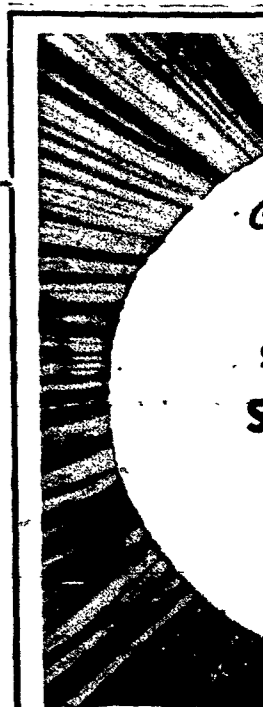
As is only proper, the boarder begins his day in the Seminary Chapel, with long prayers, a short meditation on a topic leading to spiritual life a Community Mass.

Spirituality is not so during the day. Every study period begins with a prayer. Private prayers are made throughout the day in the Blessed Sacrament student body then, in the Seminary Chapel for devotions at the end of the school session.

Spiritual reading before the next religiously in the curriculum is the curriculum of the boarding student, prayers, followed by a meditation to be continued the following day, at close of the day of the day in the Grand Silence in the whole building night prayers until the so that the points of meditation might be more easily in mind.

But the life of the student in the Seminary is not prayer alone. Since he lives in the world, though of it he must partake knowledge that he might easily be "all things men." So he must have some elementary, high and college education man of the world. To this the Seminary offers in all scholastic subjects according to the requisites State.

Scholastically the bo-



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