

Feast of the Assumption - 2021

Blessed Among Women

The Gospel of Luke, above all books of the New Testament, is about women. It reads as if a woman might have written it. It contains intimate details, which hardly would have occurred to a man.

- It begins with the birth of John the Baptist, focusing on Elizabeth, his mother.
- The next major section is Mary's story. To her we will shortly return.
- There follows the prophecy of an old woman named Anna.
- When the boy Jesus went to the temple to debate the learned doctors, the only person Luke quotes is his mother.

Many of Luke's stories from Jesus' ministry are about women:

- the woman who was a sinner,
- the woman who wouldn't give up, the widow of Nain,
- the bent over woman,
- the widow who gave her mighty mites.

At the resurrection it was only women who had the faith to go to the garden of graves. The text lists Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of Jesus, and other women. Luke reports that when they told the disciples about the empty tomb these men assumed it was an idle tale and did not believe them. And mind you, all of this from a culture in which women didn't count.

The central character in the birth narrative, a story only told by Luke, is the person closest to the event, Mary.

Body, soul, or both? Today's feast also shows us that God values our bodies. They are not only important to Him - they are sacred! There are two extremes of thought in regard to our bodies.

One considers the body as our number one treasure. Ads and commercials usually feature people with exceptional looks. To be successful, accepted, and loved, they tell us, depends upon how we look. We are to watch our weight, keep in shape, and smell just right.

If we don't pamper our bodies and treat them royally, we'll be social, business, and sexual flops. Nobody will want us around. As for the importance of our soul and our spiritual life? Forget it! They consider such things nonexistent and absurd.

The other extreme of thought about the body is to look upon it as merely a machine for us to operate in this world. Its value is only its usefulness. To enhance it with cosmetics and perfume, to dress it up and make it look attractive, to diet, exercise, and look at it in the mirror - all that is not only a waste of time, but sinful.

The soul and its spiritual condition are all that is important for us. We are to think of our body only when necessity requires.

— But God is telling us on this feast of the Assumption that to Him, **both** are important - our body and our soul. They are both to be valued, and they are to be given the attention and honor due them. (Fr. Jack Dorsel) Fr. Tony (<http://frtonyshomilies.com/>).

"I'm talking to your mother." There is an old story about a workman on scaffolding high above the nave of a cathedral who looked down and saw a woman praying before a statue of Mary.

As a joke, the workman whispered, "Woman, this is Jesus." The woman ignored him. The workman whispered again, more loudly: "Woman, this is Jesus." Again, the woman ignored him.

Finally, he said aloud, "Woman, don't you hear me? This is Jesus."

At this point the woman looked up at the crucifix and said, "Be still now, Jesus, I'm talking to your mother." (Fr Munachi E. Ezeogu).