

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Lesson

Lesson Goal: Students will understand that the Assumption of Mary is when Mary was taken to heaven both body and soul upon the completion of her earthly life. The student will also understand that this was a special favor given to Mary by God.

Overview for the Teacher: Oral tradition tells us that Mary spent her final years in care of St. John the Apostle. It also tells us that after her death the apostles opened her tomb and found it empty. To this day there is no record of the location of the bones of Mary. (Early Christians took care of the remains of their beloved saints - for example Sts. Peter and Paul and many others.) It has been a long standing understanding of the Church that God granted to Mary the privilege of immediately experiencing the resurrection of the body upon her death - something that Jesus promised to all of us at the end of the world. Pope Pius XII officially define this dogma of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in 1950.

Pre-Video Discussion: Discuss the difference between Jesus' Ascension and Mary's Assumption. These two terms can be very confusing for children. Jesus ascended into heaven by His own power. When Mary's life on earth was done she was taken into heaven, not by her own power, but rather the power of God. For younger children you could use a helium balloon as an example - the power of God being the balloon. If you put a picture of Mary on the end of the balloon's string and let it go - Mary is not going up of her own power rather the power of the balloon or God is carrying her up. Tell the student the Church has a special feast day celebrating Mary being taken up into heaven by the power of God - The Assumption.

Watch "The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary" on Catholic Brain

Comprehension and Discussion Questions:

Note: These questions are asked after the video to check student comprehension and to clarify and further discuss and explain what was seen on the video.

- 1) What is the Assumption of Mary?

The Assumption of Mary is the special favor given by God to Mary at the end of her life. Mary was taken by the power of God, or assumed, into heaven both her body and soul.



2) How is Mary's death different than ours?

When we die in God's grace only our souls will go to heaven - our souls are spirits that will live forever. Because of original sin our bodies will die. When we die our bodies are buried and stay here on earth. Our bodies and souls will be separated upon our deaths. Mary, who was free from original sin, was taken both body and soul into heaven upon her death. Mary's body did not see the decay or corruption of death. Mary is in heaven right now complete with both her body and soul. This was a special gift from God to Mary.

3) Why did God take both Mary's body and soul into heaven?

God chose Mary to be the mother of Jesus. He prepared her for this by keeping her free from original sin. Mary was born without sin and continued her entire life to do everything God asked of her. Mary carried in her sinless body Jesus, the Son of God. God did not want this special body to remain on earth and decay instead God brought her straight into heavenly glory along with her soul.

4) How do we know that Mary was assumed into heaven?

We do not find the actual story of Mary's Assumption in the Bible. This story or what the Church calls "tradition" has been told from the apostles. Mary stayed with the apostle John after Jesus returned to heaven. Upon her death, it is said the apostles opened her tomb to find it empty. They believed that Mary's body had been taken into heaven. It is a long standing tradition of the Church that Mary was assumed into heaven and in 1950 Pope Pius XII made the Assumption an official dogma (or teaching) of the Church.

5) Will our bodies someday be with our souls in heaven?

Jesus promised that when He comes again, which is called His Second Coming, our bodies and souls will be reunited. We will then enjoy heaven with both our bodies and our souls just like Mary.

Activity:

Say a decade of the rosary meditating on the 4th Glorious Mystery - The Assumption.