

Religious of the Sacred Heart, a
Our Lady's feasts AEB 683

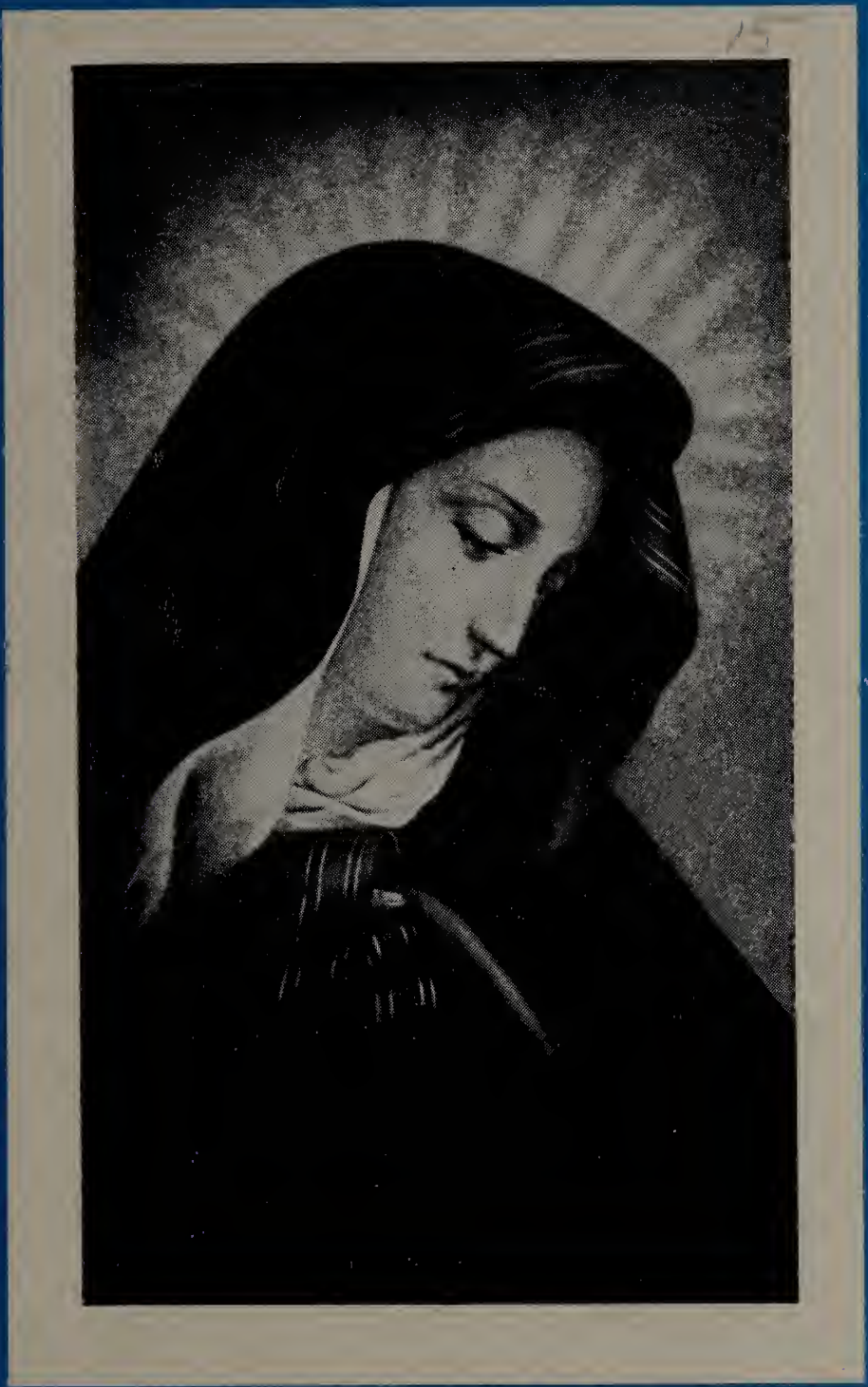
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OUR LADY'S FEASTS for Children

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By

A RELIGIOUS OF THE SACRED HEART



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Foreword

In this little book we are going to follow Our Blessed Mother as her feasts of the year tell us the story of her life. No one on earth ever loved Our Blessed Lord as she loved Him. Very reverently, then, we are going to look into Our Lady's heart, so that we, too, may learn to love Our Blessed Lord.



Feast of the Immaculate Conception

December 8

BECAUSE our Holy Father has given us this feast to be our very own in the United States, and because it is the very first feast of Our Blessed Mother's life, we are going to begin with the Immaculate Conception.

Do you know what "immaculate" means? You have seen the petals of a lily, fresh fallen snow, and the silvery whiteness of the moon. "Immaculate" means "pure." Now the soul of Our Blessed Mother was so pure that it did not have the tiniest spot upon it, and her soul was beautiful, wonderfully beautiful.



*Queen of the Most Holy Rosary,
pray for us.*



Sin is the ugliest, the most wicked thing in the world because it offends God, and so God did not want His mother to pass through its ugly flood. To explain to you what I mean I am going to tell you a story about what happened in a village in Italy. One day quite suddenly there came from the mountain side loud rumblings and then a great river of melted rock. On and on it rolled, destroying everything in its path. The villagers knew well what it meant, and with all their hearts they prayed to God to protect them. Then a wonderful thing happened. When the flood got to the edge of the village it parted, leaving the houses unhurt, and the people were saved.

Now this is just what happened for Our Blessed Mother. You know about Adam and Eve and their sin, and how, because we are all children of Adam and Eve, original sin touches our souls. God loves us and has given us the Precious Blood of His Divine Son to wash our souls. But

· He loved Our Blessed Lady so much that He did not let sin even get near her. So when her beautiful soul came into the world God parted the great, wicked flood of sin as He parted the lava for the holy village, and kept Our Lady free from sin, and this we call the Immaculate Concep-



tion. Everybody, except Our Blessed Lord, before and since the time of Our Blessed Lady has been stained by sin, but she was always immaculate.

And now just as you are happy when some lovely thing happens to one you love here on earth, tell Our Blessed Mother that you are happy that God gave her this great gift and tell Him that you thank Him and love Him because of it. Ask Our Blessed Mother to help you keep your soul free from sin, and then say very reverently:



*O Mary, Most Pure of Heart,
pray for us.*

HAIL, MARY, full of grace; the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Beads of the Immaculate Conception

Adorable Jesus, whose Divine Heart is ever ready to compassionate sinners, have mercy on us, and grant us the graces we ask through the Immaculate Heart of Thy most holy mother and ours also, to whom Thou canst refuse nothing.

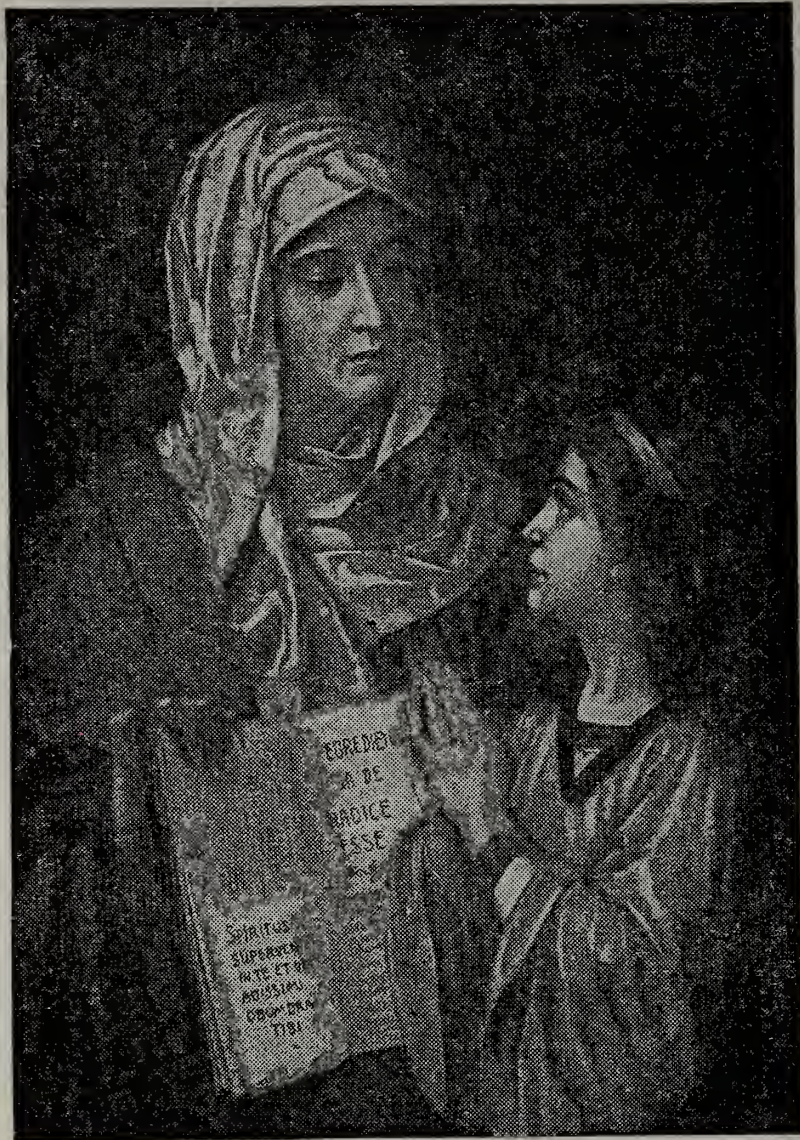
By thy Immaculate Conception and sacred virginity, O most pure Virgin, Queen of Angels, obtain that our souls and bodies may be free from all sin.

Hail Mary . . . (*three times*).

By thy Immaculate Conception. . . .

O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee (*twelve times*).

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession, was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence I fly unto thee, O Virgin of Virgins, my mother; to thee I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate despise not my petition, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen.



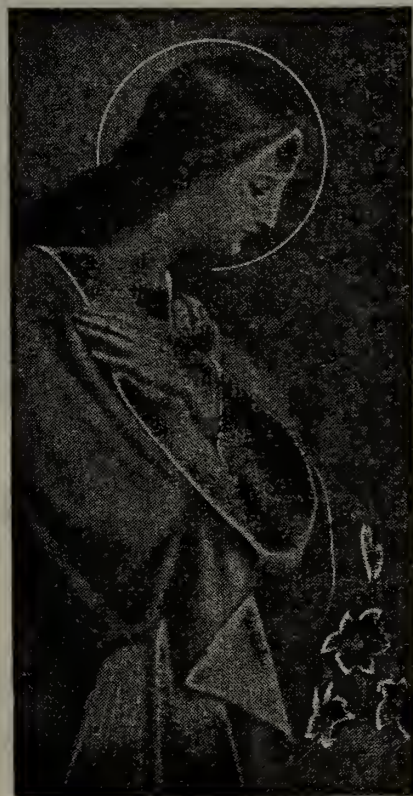
Feast of the Nativity of Our Lady

September 8

THIS feast celebrates Our Blessed Lady's birthday. Wish her in your heart a happy birthday. Our Blessed Lady's mother was St. Anne, her father was St. Joachim. They were very old and very holy, but they had one great sorrow, and that was because they had no children. But

they prayed very earnestly to God to send them one, and at last God answered their prayer and gave them a little girl. In their gratitude they consecrated her to God. That means that they gave her to Almighty God. Just how you will understand a little further on.

Make a visit to your church and talk to Our Blessed Mother in your heart about her birthday, and then ask her to help you to be like her. And then, because she likes to receive a gift on her feast, give her a bouquet of little acts of gentleness.



*Sweet Heart of Mary,
be my salvation.*



Feast of the Holy Name of Mary

September 12

ST. JOACHIM and St. Anne called their little girl Miriam, which is the Hebrew form of Mary. As you know, names sometimes mean things. Mary has many meanings. One of them is "Star of the Sea." So

Our Blessed Mother takes care of our souls
just as the North Star guides sailors at sea.

Mary also means "The Beautiful One."
Our Lady was not only beautiful to look at,
but her soul was beautiful because she
loved God very, very much. Sin is what
keeps us from loving God. So, today let us
ask Our Blessed Mother to help us and let
us say her beautiful name,

Mary

And then let us say the name she loved best
to say, the Holy Name,

Jesus

Then try to think in your heart how she
said the Holy Name and say it again,

Jesus





Feast of the Presentation of Our Lady in the Temple

November 21

THE little Mary stayed with St. Joachim and St. Anne until she was three years old. Then, because they had consecrated her to God, as you remember, they took her to the Temple to give her to Him.

Part of the great Temple of Jerusalem was set aside for Jewish girls whose parents had consecrated them to God. These children never left the Temple, but were taught there all that they should know, especially how to serve God and love Him with all their hearts.

At the foot of the great flight of steps Mary left her father and mother; her eyes were shining and she was very happy, because when we do generous things for God He fills our souls with joy.

Think in your heart about Our Blessed Mother as a little girl in the Temple school, and whenever you want to know the right thing to do, think what she would have done in your place, and say a prayer to her.

Say reverently:



*Virgin most pure, guide and bless us; guide
and bless us, Virgin most pure.*



Feast of the Annunciation

March 25

WHEN Our Blessed Mother had grown to young girlhood, she left the Temple, as was the custom, and was espoused to St. Joseph, who like her had consecrated his life to God.

One night when she was praying in her chamber, the Angel Gabriel appeared to her and said: "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee!" The Angel then explained to Our Lady that God was asking her to become His mother. Stop here for a moment and think what this meant to Our Blessed Mother, and then listen carefully to what she answered to the question of the Angel. All that she said was, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me according to Thy word." But from that moment she became really and truly the Mother of God, because Our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ her son is really and truly God.

Every day three times, at dawn, at noon and at nightfall, the Church reminds us of this great moment in the life of Our Blessed Mother in the prayer we call the Angelus. Think of it, and say the prayer with great reverence and care when you hear the church bells ring out

The Angelus

V. The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.

R. And she conceived of the Holy Ghost. Hail Mary, etc.

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R. Be it done unto me according to Thy word. Hail Mary, etc.

V. And the Word was made Flesh.

R. And dwelt among us. Hail Mary, etc.

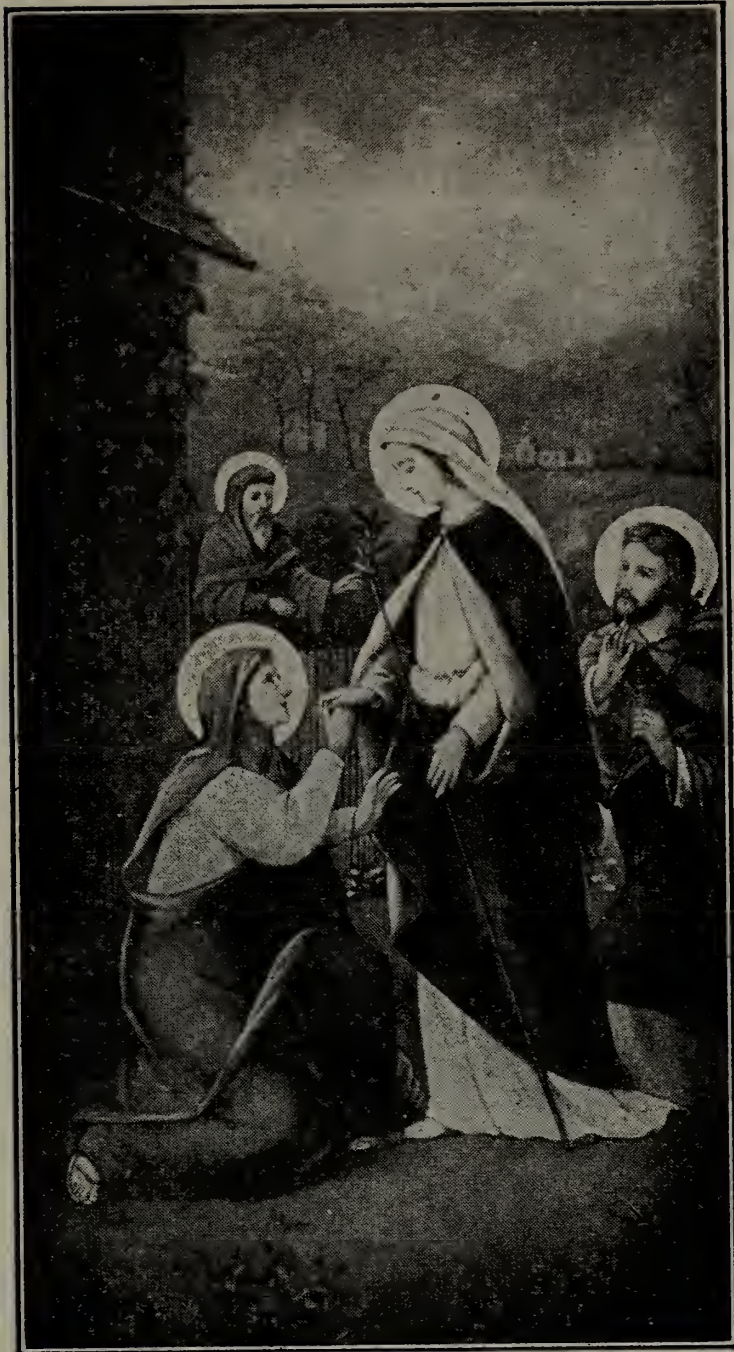
V. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

LET US PRAY

V. Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts; that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ Thy Son was made known by the message of an Angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His resurrection. Through the same Christ Our Lord.

R. Amen.



Feast of the Visitation

July 2

AFTER the Angel Gabriel had announced to Our Lady that she was to be Our Blessed Lord's mother, he told her that God was giving her cousin Elizabeth a son, too. This added to Our Blessed Mother's joy

and she went with haste into the hill country to the home of St. Elizabeth. When she got there St. Elizabeth met her and God made her understand that wonderful thing that had happened to Our Blessed Lady, that she had become the Mother of Our Lord. There is a beautiful picture which represents the meeting. Our Lady is saying the words of the beautiful hymn called



The Magnificat

My soul doth magnify the Lord.

And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my
Saviour.

For He hath regarded the humility of His
handmaid: for behold from henceforth
all generations shall call me blessed.

For He that is mighty hath done great things unto me: and holy is His name.

And His mercy is from generation to generation unto them that fear Him.

He hath showed strength with His arm: He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their heart.

He hath put down the mighty from their seat: and hath exalted the humble.

He hath filled the hungry with good things: and the rich He hath sent empty away.

He hath upholden His servant Israel: being mindful of His mercy.

As He spake unto our fathers: to Abraham and his seed for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. Amen.



Christmas

Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord

December 25

AFTER the Annunciation Our Blessed Lady waited for the birth of Our Lord, and every day she prepared her heart more and more. She knew that He must be born in Bethlehem. One day St. Joseph brought

her the news that Caesar Augustus had ordered that everyone should be enrolled, each in his own city, and that she must come with him to Bethlehem because they were of the family of David.

You know the Christmas story, you know how they found no room in the inn, how Our Blessed Lord was born in a stable on the hillside. You know how Angels sang through the starry skies of His birth and how shepherds came bringing Him gifts, and found Him lying in a manger. St. Luke, who tells us the story of the first Christmas, says that Our Blessed Lady kept all these things, pondering them in her heart. "Pondering" means "thinking," so this is why you have been asked to think in your heart about the feasts of Our Blessed Mother. Think very often about this Christmas feast which brought Our Blessed Lord into the world and why it was that He chose to be born in a poor stable instead of in a palace. And then kneel in spirit beside Our Blessed Mother and with her pray to the little Lord Jesus for all that you need to make you more like to her. Then say the beautiful prayer that has been said in the Church for hundreds and hundreds of years:



The Memorare

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession, was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence I fly unto thee, O Virgin of Virgins, my mother; to thee I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate despise not my petition, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen.



Feast of the Purification of Our Blessed Lady

February 2

WHEN the Child Jesus was forty days old Our Blessed Lady and St. Joseph took Him to Jerusalem to the Temple, where Mary had lived as a little girl, to offer Him to God. Of course you know that it really was not necessary to offer Him to God, because He was Himself God. But the Jewish Law commanded that every first baby boy should be offered to the Lord, and Our Blessed Lady and Our Blessed Lord Himself always did even little things that the Law commanded them to do.

Now when they got to the Temple they met there a very old man called Simeon who recognized Our Blessed Lord and took Him into his arms and blessed God, and

told Our Blessed Mother that she would have great sorrows in her life. And then Our Blessed Mother went through the ceremony which gives its name to the feast and which was also part of the Jewish law.

Think in your heart about this beautiful feast. It is on this day that the Church blesses the wax tapers used on the altar at Mass every day, because while holy Simeon was holding Our Blessed Lord a part of the prayer that he said called Our Blessed Lord, "A light to the revelation of the Gentiles."

Ask Our Blessed Mother on this feast to make you like her, very obedient in the least little things that the Church commands, and ask her, too, that your faith may always be bright as the light from the tapers that the Church blesses on this day, and say:

We fly to thy patronage, O Holy Mother of God, despise not our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us always from all dangers, O ever glorious and blessed Virgin.



Feast of the Seven Dolors of Our Blessed Lady

September 15 and Friday in Passion Week

IT will not seem strange to have a feast in honor of the sorrows of Our Blessed Mother if you think in your heart about her life as a whole. You will see that as she grew older the sorrows came crowding in, each one greater than the last. Her first sorrow was the prophecy of Simeon that a sword of sorrow should pierce her

heart. The second sorrow was the flight into Egypt to escape from the hate of Herod. The third sorrow was the loss of Our Blessed Lord in the Temple for three days. The fourth was the meeting with her Son on the Way to Calvary. The fifth was the Crucifixion. The sixth was the taking down of the body of Our Lord from the Cross, and the seventh was the burial of Our Blessed Lord.

You see how they are more and more sorrowful as they get to the last, and yet Our Blessed Lord loved His Blessed Mother with a love greater than we can ever imagine. The Church, that understands these things as we cannot understand them, tells us that suffering is a good thing if we accept it in the right way. You, too, have sorrows, some perhaps very great. When they press hard think of Our Blessed Lady and ask yourself how she bore her sorrow. The beautiful hymn that is sung on this feast tells us that she stood—stood without fainting at the foot of the Cross.

Ask her to help in difficult times, and try hard to learn to think of things that hurt as gifts from Our Blessed Lord. They are sent to help you first of all to do some

penance for your faults, and then because in some very mysterious way things that hurt are good for us or Our Lord would not have sent so many to His Blessed Mother.



*Mother of Love, of Sorrow and of Mercy,
pray for us.*

At the Cross her station keeping,
Stood the mournful Mother weeping,
Close to Jesus to the last;
Through her heart, His sorrow sharing,
All His bitter anguish bearing,
Now at length the sword had passed.
O thou Mother! fount of love!
Touch my spirit from above,
Make my heart with thine accord;
Make me feel as thou hast felt;
Make my soul to glow and melt
With the love of Christ my Lord.



Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady Into Heaven

August 15

THIS feast is full of joy because on this day we are reminded that the body of Our Blessed Lady was taken up into heaven shortly after her death. Of course her

blessed soul went straight to heaven when she died. Think why Our Lord allowed her dear body to remain in the tomb even for a while. It was because His body was in the tomb for three days, and she wanted to be as like Him as possible in very little things as in great things.

Our Lady, tradition tells us, was about sixty years old when she died. She had lived a long time after the Ascension of Our Lord, helping the Church in its beginnings and consoling the Apostles and the early Christians. She had lived with St. John because Our Lord had given him to her from His Cross, and the other Apostles in time had gone to different parts of the world to preach about Our Lord. When Our Blessed Lady died they were not there, and although they came, we are told that St. Thomas got there too late and that he wanted to see where they had laid her to rest. And this is how they found that her body had gone to heaven, for when the tomb was opened there were roses where they had laid her.

This feast is so great in the mind of the Church that it is one of the few feasts of obligation of the year. We are obliged to

go to Mass on this feast just as we are obliged to go to Mass on Sunday. And in this Mass the Church sings to Our Lady as to a great queen, for she is the Queen of Heaven.

Think of all these things, and just as you thanked Our Lord because He made Our Lady Immaculate, thank Him that she is Queen of Heaven and of earth as well, and say to her:

Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, our Life, our Sweetness, and our Hope! To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears. Turn, then, most gracious Advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us; and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed Fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

