

If you have a 3D TV, or go to a 3D movie, you have to wear special glasses to put into focus the picture on the screen.

If you don't, everything is blurred, fuzzy, and pretty much incomprehensible.

It's the same with this Feast of the Assumption of Mary.

To look at Mary, and her role in her Son's salvation of the world just through the lens of popular piety, is like viewing a 3D movie without the glasses.

What we must do is look at the Assumption through Scripture, and the Tradition and teaching of the Church.

So where are my Scriptural and theological 3D glasses to be focussed?

Well, on that strange, scary passage from the Book of Revelation.

Or, to give it its correct title, the Apocalypse.

Because apocalypse actually means a revealing, a making clear something that's hidden: a revelation, in other words.

Many, many people have, and still are, misusing the Book of Revelation by taking bits of it completely out of context to make a time-table for the return of Jesus at the end of the world.

Except that the Apocalypse is not a time-table for the Second Coming of Jesus.

If you don't believe me, then believe these words from the lips of Jesus Himself: "But of that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone." Mt. 24: 36

The whole point of the Apocalypse is to reveal the reality, unseen by human eye, that the Church on earth is wedded to the Church in heaven.

That despite all the evil and suffering we see around us every day in this world – this 'vale of tears' – that: "The Lamb [is] on the throne." Rev. 7: 17

Terrible sufferings and evil will be inflicted on the Church – both from within and without – by Satan, the Evil One, the Red Dragon.

But those who remain faithful to the Lamb to the end will: "Have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Because: "Now have salvation and power come, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Anointed – the Christ." Rev. 7: 14 & 12: 10

Then, our eternal destination will be in: A new heaven and a new earth." Where: "The Lamb is its light." Rev. 21: 1 & 21: 23

Of that we can be sure because: "Christ has been raised from the dead. He is the first of a great harvest of all who have died." 1 Cor. 15: 20

Where He has led Mary, His Mother, has followed because she's the faithful one par-excellence.

And, as Mary is an ordinary human being – albeit a unique one as she gave birth to the Saviour – her resting place in the Father's House will be ours too if we emulate her faithfulness to her Son.

So let's try to reveal what the Apocalypse is telling us about Jesus, and His Mother.

At the heart of the Jerusalem Temple was the sanctuary – the Holy of Holies – where the Ark of the Covenant dwelt.

In the Ark were the two tablets of stone Moses brought down from Mt. Sinai, upon which God had inscribed the Ten Commandments.

It also contained some manna with which the Lord had fed His people on their 40 year journey through the desert to the Promised Land.

It also housed the rod of Israel's first High Priest – Aaron, the brother of Moses – signifying his authority.

Only the High Priest, and only once a year on the Day of Atonement, could enter into the Holy of Holies to plead forgiveness for God's people.

The Temple sanctuary and the Ark were made by human hands to try to contain God on our terms.

But the reality of heaven revealed in the Apocalypse turns that idea on its head.

The sanctuary in heaven is the eternal God Himself: and what do we find in the sanctuary?

Not an Ark made by human hands, but a woman; and she is in labour with a male child.
The Ark of flesh and blood is Mary; prepared by God to bear, and reveal His Son to the world.
Carrying in her womb not tablets of stone, or manna, or Aaron's rod; but the Word of God, and the Bread of Life – Jesus, our eternal High-Priest.
And, so: "A child is born to us; a son is given to us." [Is. 9: 6](#)
Immediately, Satan – the Dragon – tries to destroy the child by any means possible.
It's easy to look on the Book of Revelation as a fast moving fantasy film: except, that we're not dealing with fantasy.
We're actually dealing in ultimate truth and reality that Jesus is He through whom: "Have salvation and power come, and the kingdom of our God." [Rev. 12: 10](#)
By her escaping into the desert to a place of safety prepared for her by God, the Mother of Jesus then becomes our Mother.
She becomes the Church in the world; crying aloud in the pangs of childbirth, as it were, that all of humanity will come to love and serve her Son as Lord and Saviour.
Mary is the true, and faithful one who, throughout her life said to the Lord: "May it be done to me according to your word." [Lk. 1: 38](#)
And, because of her steadfastness, at the end of her life she fell asleep, and tasted the first-fruits of her Son's Resurrection.
Her Assumption is unique to her as the Mother of the Saviour.
It's a singular participation in her Son's Resurrection: but it's also an anticipation of the resurrection of those who faithfully follow her Son in this life, to their eternal destiny in the Father's House.
For as the Lord gives His word to us in Scripture: "Just as death came into the world through a man, now the resurrection from the dead has begun through another man." [1 Cor. 15: 21 – 22](#)
Mary's Assumption is not to elevate her to the same status as God; rather, it's to show us our final destiny as faithful followers of her Son.
In today's reading from the Apocalypse we see the climax of the enmity between Satan, and God that began in the Garden of Eden.
The offspring of the New Eve, Mary, is her Son, Jesus, who has defeated the: "Great dragon – that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray." [Rev. 12: 9](#)
Yet, in the time between the Ascension of Jesus, and His coming again at the end of time, the Dragon, in his death throes, will try to drag down with him as many as he can.
However, the Lord has made a safe, secure place for us: it is Ark of the Church.
Where, through our Baptism, we share in the victory of Jesus as the Apocalypse tells us: "They – [all of us] – conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of [our] testimony." [Rev. 12: 11](#)
And we're not alone here on earth in our following of Jesus because the Church on earth is wedded to the Church in glory.
"We are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses." [Heb. 12: 1](#)
Mary, and the Saints; who are constantly praying for the Church on earth to be kept safe from the Evil One.
Assisted by their prayers: "Let us rid ourselves of every burden and sin that clings to us and persevere in running the race that lies before us while keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, the leader and perfecter of faith." [Heb. 12: 1 – 2](#)