



Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary



Date: Friday, August 15, 2025 | **Season:** Ordinary Time after Easter | **Year:** C
First Reading: Revelation 11:19a, 12:1–6a, 10ab
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 45:10–12, 16 | **Response:** Psalm 45:10bc
Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:20–27
Gospel Acclamation: Mary is taken up to heaven; a chorus of angels exults
Gospel Reading: Luke 1:39–56
Preached at: the Chapel of Richartz House in the Archdiocese of Harare, Zimbabwe.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Picture a threshing floor at harvest time. The grain has been brought in from the fields. The air smells of wheat and is filled with dust. Sunlight catches the husks so that everything seems golden. Underfoot, the farmer separates the wheat from the chaff — keeping the good grain, letting the waste blow away.

This is the picture Scripture gives us today in another way: a woman clothed with the sun, crowned with twelve stars, standing where the harvest is complete. The Mother stands in the sun — the harvest is certain.

On this Feast of the Assumption, we see Mary in the light of that threshing floor — not only as she is now in heaven, but as she was in the everyday world. She was a young woman in Nazareth who carried God’s promise in her body, who walked the dusty roads of Galilee, who stood faithfully at the foot of the Cross. Like grain brought to the threshing floor, her life passed through joy and sorrow, and at the end was gathered fully into God’s keeping.

Our first reading from Revelation (11:19a; 12:1–6a, 10ab) shows us the great heavenly floor: the Ark of the Covenant is revealed; a woman clothed with the sun cries out in labour; a dragon waits to destroy her child. The Church sees Mary in this woman — the living Ark, carrying not stone tablets but the living Word, Jesus. She is mother to Him, and to all who keep God’s commands. And even though the dragon fights, the harvest cannot be stopped.

From the earliest times, Christians called Mary the “new Eve,” whose “yes” to God undid Eve’s “no.” God kept her free from sin so she could share fully in her Son’s victory over death. In 1950, Pope Pius XII declared what the Church had always believed — that Mary, when her life was over, was taken up body and soul into heaven. She is the first sheaf lifted high — the sign that all the harvest will follow.

Psalm 45 sings of a queen in gold standing beside the king. This is not about showing off wealth, but about honour — like grain made pure and ready for the storehouse. If we truly honour Mary, we must also honour the poor and forgotten — the women selling vegetables at the roadside, the old people sitting alone, the children walking long distances to school. God’s harvest is not just about what is gathered, but about who is valued and treasured.

In 1 Corinthians (15:20–27), Paul calls Jesus the “first fruits” — the start of the great harvest. All who belong to Him will follow. Mary is the first to follow, not because she is far above us, but because she was completely open to God’s grace. If Jesus’ resurrection is the sunrise, Mary’s Assumption is the first warm light over the threshing floor — a sign that the grain is good, and God’s promise is sure.

In Luke’s Gospel (1:39–56), Mary is not in heaven yet. She is hurrying through the hills to help her cousin Elizabeth. In that small house she sings the Magnificat — a song that shakes the threshing floor, separating the pride of the mighty from the humility of the lowly, the emptiness of the rich from the fullness given to the hungry. In Ignatian prayer, we can stand there with her — feel the earth under our feet, smell the bread in the oven, and hear her calling us to let God begin His work in us.

Here in Zimbabwe, we know our own threshing floors — in the fields, in the markets, in the places where hunger, corruption, and hopelessness threaten to ruin the harvest. But Mary stands with us, in the dust and the sunlight, reminding us that the wheat will be gathered, the chaff will pass away, and God’s barn is open to all.

Her Assumption is not an escape from the world’s problems — it is the completion of a life given fully to God. It shows us that even our tired, hard-working bodies are destined for glory. Evil may roar, but it will not reign. God’s harvest

will not be lost.

So this week, I invite you to pray with these questions:

- On God’s threshing floor, am I like the wheat gathered in, or like the chaff that resists His work?
- What “dragons” threaten the harvest in my own life and in my community, and how can I stand with Mary against them?
- How can I let Mary’s Magnificat shape my actions this week, so that I help lift the lowly and feed the hungry?

Mary now stands in glory, praying for us as we work on the threshing floor of this world.

The Mother stands in the sun — and the harvest is certain.

Source: <https://sj.mcharlesworth.fr/homilies/2025-08aug-15-yc-ot-19/>

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