An Assumptionist perspective



In the closing sermon of a retreat that Fr. D'Alzon, founder of the Assumptionists, gave to his religious, he addresses the topic of the meaning of the Feast of the Assumption for members of the Assumption family.

He points out that, in truth "we did not choose this title – it was providentially chosen for us. The words inscribed over the front door of this establishment [Assumption College in Nimes, France] had been there for many years before we took possession of what was to become the cradle of our religious family. It was not we ourselves who chose Our Blessed Lady triumphant in Heaven to be our special protectress. It was she who seems to have looked down from Heaven and said: 'This house was given to me – I, in turn, give it to you.'" *Spiritual Writings, p 1025.*

Mary's Assumption is understood in the context of Mary's total role as Mother of Christ and Mother of the Church. Fr. D'Alzon saw Mary in that way and so do his sons and daughters in the Assumption family. "The mystery that unifies the life of Mary is the Immaculate Conception; the mystery that fulfills her in glory is the Assumption. Between the two and in order to unify them we discover her compassion." (*Letter to Mother Marie Correnson, Letters VII, pp*

140-141). The Assumptionist sees Mary as inseparably united to Christ in His redemptive work. Mary was preserved from original sin, alone among the children of Adam and Eve to have that privilege because she was to be the mother of Jesus Christ, Son of God. Her glorious Assumption is the logical consequence of that beginning, her obedience to the call of the Annunciation and the close union of Mary with Christ during his life on earth.

What are the consequences of this doctrine for us believers? Immense hope for the followers of Christ.

Assumptionists are also sensitive to the importance of this feast for christians of the Eastern Churches. The Byzantine liturgy for the feast of the Dormition of Mary (the falling asleep of Mary) [as the feast is called in the East] contains this troparion:" In giving birth you kept your virginity; in your Dormition you did not leave the world, O Mother of God, but were joined to the source of Life. You conceived the living God and, by your prayers, will deliver our souls from death."

Fr. Martin Jugie (1878-1954) Assumptionist theologian and specialist in the theology of the Easter Churches, was a major contributor to the studies that preceded the proclamation of the dogma of Mary's Assumption by Pius XII in November 1950.