Reflection on the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary August 15, 2023 (Holy Day of Obligation)

The Solemnity of the Assumption celebrates the Blessed Mother’s entrance into heavenly glory. The Catechism explains that Mary “was taken up body and soul into the glory of heaven, where she already shares in the glory of her Son’s Resurrection, anticipating the resurrection of all members of his Body” (CCC, 974).

Mary’s Assumption into heaven reminds us that life on earth is a pilgrimage to our ultimate destination. We prepare in hope for our own passage into eternal life by the choices we make today. When we choose to love and follow God in our daily lives, we strengthen our relationship with Him, and this relationship is the true meaning of heaven: “To live in heaven is ‘to be with Christ’” (CCC, 1025 citing St. Ambrose, In Luc.,10,121:PL 15 1834A).

We can see how, throughout her life, the Blessed Mother continually chose to go deeper into her relationship with God. She modeled how to value and respect His precious gift of human life, from the moment of conception to its natural end. In the Annunciation, through her “yes,” Mary witnessed to the undeniable humanity of unborn children as she conceived and carried the Christ child in her womb. After the Annunciation, having learned that her cousin Elizabeth was with child, she went in haste to her aid.

Our Blessed Mother shows us how the way we live today can prepare us, in hope, to also enter into heavenly glory at the end of our lives. Are we open to God’s precious gift of new life? How do we support pregnant mothers and parents of young children? Do we prioritize showing our love to those who are ill or aging? Do we care for them in a way that respects God’s gift of life?

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.