



Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò

PROFER LUMEN CÆCIS

Homily in the Assumption of Mary Most Holy into Heaven

The Great Pontiff Pius XII proclaimed the dogma of the Assumption into heaven of Mary Most Holy on November 1, 1950, with the Bull *Munificentissimus Deus*:

«After we have poured forth prayers of supplication again and again to God, and have invoked the light of the Spirit of Truth, for the glory of Almighty God who has lavished his special affection upon the Virgin Mary, for the honor of her Son, the immortal King of the Ages and the Victor over sin and death, for the increase of the glory of that same august Mother, and for the joy and exultation of the entire Church; by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, of the Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, and by our own authority, we pronounce, declare, and define it to be a divinely revealed dogma: that the Immaculate Mother of God, the ever Virgin Mary, having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory. »

These solemn words constitute the last dogma defined by the Holy Church, before the painful eclipse that has now obscured the Bride of the Lamb for more than sixty years. The end of that glorious Pontificate marked the beginning of a Calvary that today is approaching its conclusion. The *passio Ecclesiae*, the passion of the Mystical Body, modeled on the Passion and Death of its Divine Head, is a mystery that we have always believed concerned the individual members of the Church – according to the words of the Apostle, *in my turn I complete in my flesh what is still lacking in the afflictions of Christ for his body, which is the Church* (Col 1:24) – but that the events we are now witnessing show us in its social and ecclesial dimension. It is the entire Mystical Body that must suffer, die, and rise again, in order to triumph together with the immortal King of the ages.

The Virgin Mary is mystically associated with the Passion of Her Divine Son: as the New Eve, she suffered and endured the pains of Christ, the New Adam, deserving the title of Co-Redemptrix. Her glorious Assumption into heaven in body and soul is for us a reason for joy and consolation, not only for this privilege that the Lord wanted to reserve – among other privileges – for his own Mother; but also because She, Mother and Queen of the Church, is a figure of that heavenly Jerusalem, *beata pacis visio*, which is the Church itself. In Her we see the will of God accomplished, in the humility and obedience by which Jesus Christ bore witness to the Eternal

Father, and that the Church makes her own in the profession of the One Faith and in the bond of Charity.

The Virgin of the Assumption merited not to know the corruption of the body, just as Our Lord did not know it. The Eastern Tradition, since the first centuries, shows us an uninterrupted faith in this truth: the depictions of the *dormitio Virginis* show us the Blessed Mother on her deathbed, surrounded by the Apostles, while Her soul – a young soul like that of a child – is welcomed into the bosom of the Holy Trinity.

But if the Virgin Mary is a figure of the Church; if She is its Mother to the point of having given birth to us into Grace by the pains that She mystically suffered together with the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ; if She is her Mistress and Queen *by grace*, for having redeemed us by virtue of the merits of the Co-Redemption, we can hope that the Church herself will see herself in some way assumed into heaven, as in the vision of Saint John: *I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband* (Rev 21:2). And who is she, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, if not the *Mater Ecclesiae*, the Immaculate Virgin, Mother of God and our Mother? It is She, in the power of Her most holy humility and immaculate purity, who sums up in Herself the vision of the beloved Apostle. She is the one *who rises like the dawn, beautiful as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an army in battle array* (Song of Songs 6:10). She is *the dwelling place of God among men* (Rev 21:3): *the bride of the Lamb* (Rev 21:9), whose splendor *is like that of a very precious gem, like a crystalline jasper stone* (Rev 21:11); she has no need of the light of the sun, nor of the light of the moon, because the glory of God illuminates her and her lamp is the Lamb (Rev 21:23).

The Holy Church, like her Queen, is a holy city that gathers its children from every part of the world and from every age: *There will in no way enter into her anything impure, nor anyone who practices abomination or falsehood, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life* (Rev 21:27). *Whoever is victorious will inherit these goods; I will be his God and he will be my son. But the cowards and the unbelievers, the vile and murderers, the immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars will have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone. This is the second death* (Rev 21:7-8).

The vision of Patmos shows us the Church triumphant, which in this is similar to the Virgin Mary. But on this earth the Church – which is militant as the conqueror of all heresies – does not yet know eternal glory and must face the terrible trials that await her not only during her pilgrimage through the centuries, but also and above all in the end times, when the persecution of the Antichrist will rage against her in the illusion of conquering her. And while the Church appears mocked, humiliated and struck to death – just as the Savior was mocked, tortured, and killed – her Ministers flee, hide, and deny knowing the Galilean. Alone, together with Saint John, the Sorrowful Virgin remains at the foot of the Cross, to complete in her own most pure flesh what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ. And in this silent testimony, in which the pain of the soul incomparably surpasses physical suffering, Mary Most Holy is an example to those who, in these terrible moments of crisis and apostasy, remain at the foot of the cross from which the Holy Church hangs, dying. They too – and we with them – suffer in seeing the Mystical Body crucified, following in the footsteps of its Head. And we must all take as our guide the Mother of God, our model, the star that shows us the painful way of the Cross as the only path to the glory of the beatific vision.

Let us not be surprised if the enemies of Christ also seek to obscure the Virgin Mary: they fear her more than the Lord, because they know that it is to Her, and to no other creature, that Providence has entrusted the Church and every baptized person – *Auxilium Christianorum* – and that it will be She who will destroy the Synagogue of Satan.

Let us pray, dear brothers, that this *passio Ecclesiae* may open the eyes of the lukewarm who are still sluggish in their spiritual drowsiness. Let us ask the Virgin of the Assumption to restore sight to the blind – *profer lumen cæcis*, we sing in the ancient hymn *Ave Maris Stella* – so that they may see and understand that the one true Church of Christ cannot have peace with the world, because it does not belong to her and is indeed her enemy. So that they may see and understand that *the cowards and the unbelievers, the vile and the murderers, the immoral, the sorcerers, the idolaters, and all liars* (Rev 21:7) cannot take part in the banquet of the Lamb unless they convert, repent, and repair the evil they have committed. And if the deception of the Enemy has forged a counterfeit of this unique Ark of salvation, our response cannot be to flee or hide, but rather to remain close to the dying Lord and to His Most Holy Mother, like Saint John.

We confidently await the blessed day when the Lord will return in glory to recapitulate all things in Himself, to definitively restore His Universal Lordship. He will repeat to the Church the words He addressed to the Most Holy Mary: *Arise, my Beloved, my Beautiful One, and come away! O my dove, who art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the ravine, show me your face, let me hear your voice, for your voice is sweet, your face is lovely* (Song of Songs 2:13-14).

It will be then that we will see the Immaculate Virgin, the *Woman clothed with the sun and with the moon under Her feet, crowned with twelve stars* (Rev 12:1) descend from heaven like the heavenly Jerusalem, to trample with Her virginal heel the head of the ancient Serpent (Gen 3:15). Her humility will conquer the rebellious pride of Satan; Her purity will crush the impure spirit; Her faithfulness will conquer betrayal and apostasy. And so may it be.

+ Carlo Maria Viganò, *Archbishop*

15 August MMXXIV a. D.ñi
In Assumptione B.M.V.