



Missionarii Sancti Joannis Baptistæ

Vox clamantis in deserto, parate viam Domini

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Pinning Intentions to Our Lady's Mantle

IN THE CARMELITE ORDER there is a beautiful tradition touching upon the mystery of Our Lady's Assumption into Heaven. Since the Carmelites consider themselves to be Our Lady's Order, their heavenly Foundress leaves behind Her last will and testament for her daughters. In the will She leaves them each something such as Her mantle, Her scapular, Her veil, Her tears, a share in Her interior life, and the most prized possession of all, Her Immaculate Heart.

As St. Paul rightly points out in his letter to the Hebrews, a will only takes effect upon the death of the testator. *"For where there is a testament, the death of the testator must of necessity come in. For a testament is of force, after men are dead: otherwise it is as yet of no strength, whilst the testator liveth"*

(Heb. 9:16-17). It has been a continuous tradition in the whole Church, East and West, that Our Blessed Lady really died. Although in modern times some try to make something out of the fact that Pope Pius XII did not include Her death in his dogmatic definition of the Assumption (he merely stated that She was assumed into heaven after "having completed the course of Her earthly life"), nevertheless, it is important to note that multiple times in the same encyclical, using sources from both the Eastern and Western Liturgies as well as Eastern and Western Fathers and Doctors, he clearly indicates that She truly died. Here are a few examples: quoting from the Missal that Pope Adrian sent to the Emperor Charlemagne: "Venerable to us, O Lord, is the festivity of this day on which the holy Mother of God suffered temporal death...", as well as the Byzantine liturgy, which says: "God, the King of the universe, has granted you favors that surpass nature. As he kept you a virgin in childbirth, thus He has kept your body incorrupt in the tomb and has glorified it by His divine act of transferring it from the tomb." He also quotes St. Alphonsus, who wrote: "Jesus did not wish to have the body of Mary corrupted after death...", and St. Francis De Sales, who asked: "What son would not bring his mother back to life and would not bring her into paradise after her death if he could?" And finally, "It follows that the holy Fathers and the great Doctors, in the homilies and sermons they gave the people on her feast day, ... not only that the dead body of the Blessed Virgin Mary remained incorrupt, but that She gained a triumph out of death, Her heavenly glorification after the example of Her only begotten Son, Jesus Christ...". This is very apparent

great works of art displaying Our Lady throughout the world, one finds in nearly every place a depiction of Her death.

The Blessed Virgin Mary died because Her divine Son died. She wanted to be like Him in every way. This makes perfect sense since the nature of true love is to strive for equality. If the beloved has to suffer, so too does the lover long to share the same suffering. If the beloved has to die, so too does the lover long to die. *No Greater love hath a man than he lay down his life for his friends.* Can anyone fathom the Mother of God, so perfectly united to Her Son in true love, not wanting or being able to die with Him and for Him? Impossible! Our Lady had perfect love and the way it is best expressed is giving all in death.



Furthermore, among many other reasons why Our Lady really died, we recall here how She received us as Her adopted children at the foot of the Cross. As the best of all mothers, She wanted to help us die well by meriting additional graces through Her own death such that we can say with great confidence, *"pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen."*

In the month of August dedicated to Blessed Mary's Immaculate Heart, we find Her Assumption at the very center. Again, before She could rise up, body and soul into Heaven, She first needed to lay down Her life. Her body and soul indeed separated, but not in a painful death. She endured that pain spiritually at the foot of the Cross in union with Her Divine Son on Calvary. She instead slept sweetly (thus, it is sometimes called "The Dormition")... dying out of Love... on August 13th so that His Majesty might come three days later to take up Her blessed body and re-unite it with Her soul, completely glorified.

To the reasons given above, we might add this pious one as we prepare for Her feast day. With Her death, we have a few days to pin our intentions on Her mantle so that She will be forced, as it were, to take them with Her to Heaven at Her Assumption. Is this not one of the reasons why the "Lesser Litanies" are prayed the three days before His Majesty's Ascension? Just as these litanies provide a chance to load His Majesty down with requests, so too the same holds for His Blessed Mother. Let's pray our Novena to pin upon Her our intentions.

And we have a special intention for you to join with us in pinning on Her blessed mantle. . .

Dear faithful friends, relatives, and benefactors,

You have loyally supported us over the years in all the efforts of the Missionaries of St. John the Baptist (MSJB) to build-up the Mystical Body of Christ on earth. During all this time of your unfailing support, we have been able to accomplish amazing things, such as purchasing this property in Park Hills and making it very beautiful and prayerful.

Our repeated promise to you has been to build a worthy grotto for Our Lady.

Going back in time a bit we recall Bishop Foys' repeated pleas to establish a Personal Latin Mass Parish in his Diocese. Back then, we wondered who would be the patron of the parish. It was then when one of the faithful approached us with a number of statues she had in her home, preserved by her parents from the iconoclasm of the previous decades. Among those statues was a most beautiful and rare one of Our Lady of Lourdes. This image harmonized perfectly with the patrimony of our religious institute, which was placed under the patronage of the Immaculate Conception. Pope Gregory XVI did this on his own initiative in 1834, when he approved the original constitutions of our Order. Indeed, after repeated requests to know her name at the original grotto in Lourdes, France, she declared in a solemn way to St. Bernadette on March 25, 1858, "*I am the Immaculate Conception.*" She would be our patroness. This same rescued rare statue now adorns the high altar in the church.

When searching for a church building for the proposed parish, we found one having an excellent location for building a grotto into the hillside. After purchasing, refurbishing, and dedicating the church, we sought permission to build this outdoor shrine to Our Lady of Lourdes.

As many of you know, there was resistance to this. Please know that in all we have done here, we have always followed the law and sought the proper permits. Thus, we made a presentation to the city council of Park Hills as requested, approached the public permitting department for our county and received the approved adjustments from the city's zoning Board of Adjustments. Sadly, this was appealed by one neighbor and off we went with the city to the district judge who upheld the ruling in our favor. But this, too, was appealed. Again, the city presented the case before the court of appeals, which we unfortunately lost. We then took the case to the Supreme Court of Kentucky without the aid of the city, and sadly lost again. We were left pondering what the next step might be. What did God want us to do?

While considering these things, Attorneys Jeremy Dys and Roger Byron of First Liberty Institute, approached the Missionaries to see if we would be willing to let them appeal to the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS). We were astonished by their encouraging offer and their edifying presence and explanations. It was refreshing to meet such good and manly men and to

discuss the matters surrounding our case. We all agreed that we would like to try. First Liberty hired one of America's best lawyers to present the case before SCOTUS, Mr. John Bash.

We met the requirements and deadlines, but the opposition opted to make no reply. SCOTUS has now requested the opposition's response before it decides whether to accept our petition. The opposition also found a high-powered lawyer and is presently building its case. SCOTUS will review the case this fall (early to mid-October) to see if it will accept our petition in what appears to be an overdue case to settle matters with the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA). The enforcement of this law is the key issue, as it is a federal law enacted in 2000 that protects religious institutions from discrimination in zoning and land use regulations. It prohibits local governments from imposing land use regulations that substantially burden religious exercise without a compelling governmental interest executed in the least restrictive way on religious exercise. RLUIPA also requires local governments to treat religious institutions the same way secular institutions are treated in zoning matters.

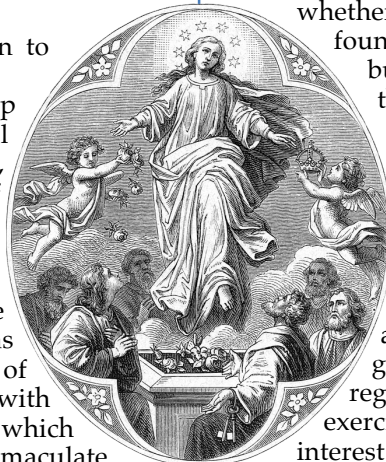
What we are asking of you, our faithful friends, relatives, and benefactors is PRAYER! Please join us in attaching a note to Our Lady's mantle to be taken up to Heaven on August 15th in order to be presented to His Majesty, Our Blessed Lord and King. Thus, we are including the Novena to Our Lady Assumed into Heaven in this newsletter. Please join us in praying this prayer for nine days so that our case will indeed be accepted before the Supreme Court of the United States. ✠

Novena for the Assumption (6th-14th)

MAJESTIC QUEEN of Heaven ✠ and Mistress of the Angels, ✠ thou didst receive from God the power and commission ✠ to crush the head of Satan; ✠ wherefore we humbly beseech thee, ✠ send forth the legions of heaven, ✠ that, under thy command, ✠ they may seek out all evil spirits, ✠ engage them everywhere in battle, ✠ curb their insolence, ✠ and hurl them back into the pit of hell. "Who is like unto God?"

MOST high Queen of the universe, ✠ Mary ever Virgin, ✠ make intercession for (*that our Grotto case to be accepted by SCOTUS*), ✠ thou who didst bear Christ the Lord, ✠ the Savior of all mankind.

O GOOD and tender Mother, ✠ thou shalt ever be our hope ✠ and the object of our love. **O MOTHER** of God, ✠ send forth the holy Angels to defend us ✠ and drive far from us the cruel foe. **HOLY ANGELS** and Archangels, ✠ defend us and keep us. *Amen.*



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Thank you for your support! May God reward you!

The Missionaries of Saint John the Baptist (www.msjb.org)

