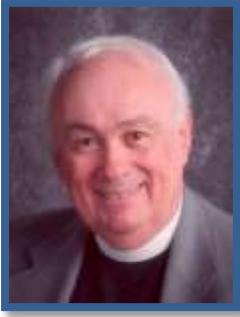


Thoughts from the Tower



This Wednesday, Catholics throughout the world celebrate the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. We rejoice in our belief that the victory over death won by Jesus in his cross and resurrection he has shared in a unique way



with his mother. We believe with all our fellow Christians that it was through the Holy Spirit's gift to her at the Annunciation that the Word of God became one of us and could begin his mission to rescue us all from sin and death as he brought about a new world of justice, peace, and love. Catholics hold that it was therefore only fitting that Christ who is the "first fruits" of the resurrection and who shares this victory with those who believe in him (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:23) should share this victory in a special way with Mary who played such an essential role in its accomplishment.

There is a unique way in which Catholics influenced by Celtic spirituality have traditionally celebrated this feast. While we join with all Catholics in celebrating Eucharist on this day, we also practice the custom of Coming to the Waters. Like many of our customs (Christmas trees, Easter bunnies, Hallowe'en costumes) the taking a few steps into the water on Assumption Day is an ancient pagan practice that has been "baptized" (if you'll excuse the pun). Since it is through Baptism that we are made partakers in Christ's resurrection, it can be appropriate for us to come once again to the waters as we turn the ancient celebration of the autumn god Lugh into the ever new celebration of Christ's victory shared with Mary and with us all.

Traditionally we pray for good health as fall approaches. A friend of mine experienced a 20-year remission of cancer as we prayed in the ocean off Malibu on Assumption day – but that's a story for another time. I hope to lead a small procession to the ocean after the 5:00 p.m. Mass on Tuesday, Assumption Eve.

Father Donald