



The Dormition of Our Lady the Virgin Mary, the Theotokos

Key Verse

**“Rejoice, highly favoured one, the Lord
is with you; blessed are you among
women”
Luke 1: 28**

St Mary's Life - Quick Quiz

1. Who are St Mary's parents?
2. What was St Mary's sister's name?
3. How many nephews did St Mary have? What were their names?
4. Did St Mary have any nieces?
5. Who gave St Mary her name?
6. How old was St Mary when she was sent to the temple?

St Mary's Life - Quick Quiz cont.

7. Who took care of St Mary when she was given to the temple?
8. At what age did she leave the temple?
9. Who looked after her when her father/ mother died?
10. Approx how old was Joseph when Mary was betrothed to him?

BONUS PRIZE! *(For those listening to the synaxarium...)*

1. Approx how old was Mary at her dormition?

St Mary's Dormition - 29 January, 21 Tubah

- Our lady, St Mary was informed by the Holy Spirit before her departure
- The virgins of the Mount of Olives came to her with the apostles who were still alive and they surrounded her bed
- Our Lord Jesus Christ came with thousands and thousands of angels and surrounded her bed
- She blessed the apostles at their request
- Her body was carried to Gethsemane
- A Jew tried to seize the coffin but his hands were immediately separated from his body and remained attached to the coffin
- He wept and was sorrowful - and through the prayers of the apostles his hands were reattached to his body and he believed in Jesus Christ!



St Thomas Witnesses Her Body Ascending to Heaven



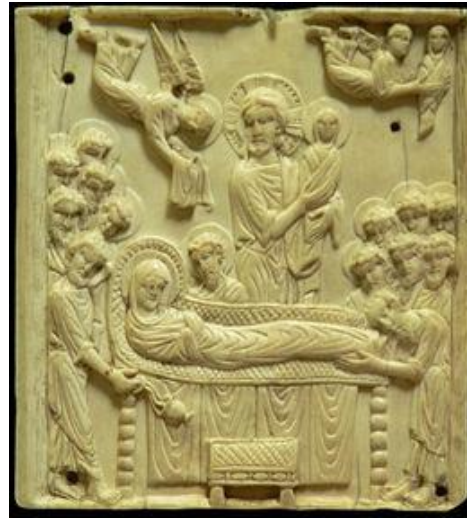
- St Thomas, on his way to Jerusalem saw the body of St Mary carried by angels
- He was carried by a cloud and was told by the angels to *“Make haste and kiss the pure body of St Mary”*
- When he arrived to the disciples and they informed him of St Mary’s death he said: *“You know how I conducted myself at the resurrection of our Lord, and I will not believe unless I see her body”*
- When they took him to her tomb - they were utterly baffled to find her body gone!
- St Thomas told them what he saw
- Then the Holy Spirit told them that the Lord had not wished for her body to remain on earth
 - *Why do you think that was the case?*

The Apostles Await St Mary's Appearance

- The Lord promised the apostles would see St Mary in the flesh again
- They waited until 16 Misra for the promise to be fulfilled
- The Theotokos appeared to the apostles surrounded by a myriad of angels and said to them: "Rejoice, I will be with you always".
- The Feast of the Dormition is preceded by a two-week fast, referred to as the Dormition Fast - from August 1-14



Differences between Orthodox and Catholic Beliefs about her Dormition



- Roman Catholic teaching suggests that St Mary was "assumed" into heaven, which is often interpreted as meaning she did not experience death
- Both churches agree that she was taken up into heaven bodily

A Summary of St Mary's Life

- Age 3: Her parents leave her at the temple to serve and she was loved by all
- Age 12: the priests decide to betroth her to Joseph
- She spent 34 years in Joseph's house - until the ascension of our Lord
- She spent 14 years with St. John the Evangelist, according to the commandment of the Lord which he told her at the cross, "*Behold, this is your son,*" and to St. John, "*Behold, this is your mother.*"
 - ***What do you notice about St Mary's character?***

What Can we Learn from St Mary's Character?

a) Obedience

- Accepts to be the Mother of God even though she was not married and pregnant virgins are a great shame and can be stoned

b) Humility

- In how she served Elizabeth, traveled long distances to help an elderly in her pregnancy (even though she was the Mother of God)
- Luke 2:15 So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us." And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. And all those who heard it marvelled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. **But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.**
- Luke 2:48 So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously." And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them. Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, **but His mother kept all these things in her heart.** And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and men.

What Can we Learn from St Mary's Character?

c) Meekness

d) Life of Acceptance

- Even at the age of 12

e) Purity (Refer to Luke 1:26-45 John 2:1-2)

Why Ask for Her Intercessions?

There is no other name under heaven by whom we can be saved except that of Jesus Christ.

(Acts 4:12)

Q If that is the case why is it in the Church rites that believers ask for the intercession of St. Mary and the prayers of the Saints?

Are there any evangelical texts that prove the Saints' intercession?

The Power of Intercessions

- The Gospel in its spirit and texts, aims at bringing man to the experience of divine life, that is, **divine love**.
- This means **putting aside your own life** so that by the holy spirit you offer salvation for all fellow brethren
- Hence the concept of intercession - as the soul moves closer to God, in deeper union with J.C, it becomes more attached to others
- We are all mediators for the grace of others
- Christ responded positively to those that petitioned for others:
 - □ He healed the paralytic for the sake of those who brought him. (Mat. 9:2). He healed the centurion's servant because of the petition of his master (Mat. 8:5) and the daughter of the Canaanite woman's madness in response to the cries of her mother.

Biblical References to Intercessions

- Pray for one another:
 - James 5:16, 2 Thes 3:1, Heb 13:18, Eph 6:18
- Examples of Intercession
 - Abraham & King Abimelech Gen 20:1-7.
 - Job and his 3 friends Job 42:7-8.
 - Abraham and Sodom Gen 18:17, 26-32.
 - Moses and the people of Israel Ex 32:7-14.
- Intercessions on Behalf of the dead
 - For the sake of King David 1 kings 11:12-13, 31-32, Ps 132:10

Intercessions of the saints declare the unity of the Church, as members of one body, all members suffering if one is hurt, and pleased at the honour of others. (1 Cor. 12:26, 27).

The Mystery of Her Intercession

- We have seen the importance and power of intercessions
- How much more powerful would the prayers of the Mother of God be?!!
- We have seen her receive motherhood of the incarnate Son of God and become Mother of His flesh - His church
- She has a responsibility, therefore for unceasing work
- God chose Her from all mankind and she was verified by Her faith in the word and promises of God.... That has made Her a **superior member of the body of Christ** who responds to the need of the other members, seeking the salvation of everybody

Limits of Her Intercession

- The wedding of Cana of Galilee
- She told Christ, 'they have no wine!'
- Whilst Christ already knew and did not need to be told, He rejoices at the mutual feelings of love in His mother and His children
- Her request (made only once) was answered: 'Woman, why turn to me? My hour has not come yet.'

The Lord's Reply Signifies the Intercession of St Mary....

- **FIRSTLY**

- It illustrates St Mary's trust in Him - she did not repeat her question
- With every confidence she told the people 'Do whatever He tells you'
- She was positive that her Son would answer her request for her children

- **SECONDLY**

- This story enables us to understand intercession
- We aren't giving worship to her personality , but rather her ability to direct our hearts
- **With her aid, we can direct our hearts to “Do whatever He tells you.”**
- Ask her intercessions to be able to fulfill the commandment of her son

The Miracles of St Mary

- The Syrian Church seeks the intercession of our Lady the Virgin Mary. The miracles which the Virgin performed for the Church and the believers are uncountable. Her belt is honoured and it is a source of blessing. No wonder, if clothes were put on the Apostle Paul's body and then taken and placed on sick people and receive healing, how much more will be the belt of our Lady the Virgin which was weaved by her pure hands and she engirdled herself with it, and most likely it touched the Redeemer's body! ?

The Virgin Mary through the Prophecies

- ***The Seed Of The Women***

- Gen 3:15 “And I will put enmity Between you and the woman,
And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise His heel.”
- “Death through Eve, life through Mary.”
- You still sees today statues of Mary trampling the head of the serpent

- ***The Virgin Shall Conceive***

Isa 7:14

"Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.



- ***The Closed Gate***

- Ezek 44:1 Then He brought me back to the outer gate of the sanctuary which faces toward the east, but it was shut. And the LORD said to me, "This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter by it, because the LORD God of Israel has entered by it; therefore it shall be shut.
- Symbolic of the her perpetual virginity - she did not have relations with Joseph after Christ's birth

- ***A Fountain Sealed***

- Song 4:12 A garden enclosed Is my sister, my spouse, A spring shut up, A fountain sealed

The Burning Bush

- Exo 3:1 Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. And he led the flock to the back of the desert, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. 2 And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed. 3 Then Moses said, "I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn." 4 So when the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am."
- Just like the fire did not consume or damage the bush, the Divinity of our Lord did not consume Virgin Mary, nor her virginity was affected by giving birth

Jacob's Ladder

Gen 28:12 Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.

St Mary is the ladder connecting heaven and earth because the Lord descended and came to the world through her

The Ark Of The Covenant - Heb 9:3

The incorruptible wood of the ark overlaid with gold = St Mary's purity

The ark remained 3 months in the house of Obed before King David took it as St Mary remained 3 months in Judea with Elizabeth

King David 'leapt joyfully before the ark.' St John leapt in Elizabeth's womb before Mary

The Rod Of Aaron

- Num 17:8 Now it came to pass on the next day that Moses went into the tabernacle of witness, and behold, the rod of Aaron, of the house of Levi, had sprouted and put forth buds, had produced blossoms and yielded ripe almonds.

- The lifeless rod of Aaron that blossomed (Num 17:1-8) = virgin who gave birth to the Lord without human seed

Pray to Our Lady, the Theotokos for Her Intercessions!

In birth, you preserved your virginity; in death, you did not abandon the world, O Theotokos. As mother of life, you departed to the source of life, delivering our souls from death by your intercessions.



Questions

&

Answers



Glory be to our God forever
Amen

