

THE HOLY LADY MARY

The Liberal Catholic Church recognises the Holy Lady Mary as a real Presence in the world, and those of its members who are drawn to the particular lines of service performed in Her name, offer to Her a deep reverence which is greater than the veneration rendered to the saints, but distinct from the supreme worship due to God alone.

This conforms to the high place of honour accorded to Her in the Eastern Churches and in the Church of Rome, in which her Immaculate Conception and Assumption have become articles of faith (in 1854 and 1950 respectively). However, The Liberal Catholic Church ascribes a deeper significance to those – and other - miraculous events which adorn the historical accounts and legends of Her life.

Thus, the Immaculate Conception may be regarded as the rebirth into this world of one who, over a long series of lives, had attained to a state of purity in which there was no germ of ‘sin’, or in other words no residual cause created in former lives whose effect required expiation. Mary was thus ‘stainless’ and therefore the perfect vehicle to bear the physical body of Our Lord.

According to the Catholic tradition, at the end of Her life Mary was taken up (assumed) body and soul into heaven, and in religious paintings is shown either rising bodily or borne up to heaven by angels from the tomb in which She was laid by the apostles after Her ‘Dormition’, or ‘sleep’.

From a Liberal Catholic point of view the Assumption of Our Lady symbolises the completely purified human soul rising in its perfection, through the power of the Spirit, to higher planes of consciousness where further, more exalted forms of service are undertaken. Liberal Catholic writers are consistent in suggesting that, of several possible lines of higher service, Mary chose to join the angelic hierarchies and was taken up into that joyous company. Later She became ‘Queen of the Angels’ – one of the many titles ascribed to Her.

A representation of the Virgin Mother in the fullness of Her heavenly glory after Her Coronation is to be found in the Vision of St. John at Patmos – (Revelation 12:1).

“And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.”

In the literature of The Liberal Catholic Church, and in some other esoteric writings, it is affirmed that our Lady, aided by her attendant angels, takes all children into Her special care. She is also depicted as seeking to inspire women to recognise their latent divinity and to release those forces which will give a new spiritual impulse, so that by their growing nobility of spirit, they are enabled to help in the elevation of the human race. Our Lady, or one of Her myriad angel representatives, is said to be present at every birth, and as ‘Consoler of the Afflicted’ She is seen as enfolding all who suffer through poverty, sickness, or any other adversity.

These claims may seem too great, too grand, to be comprehended – but only if we are thinking in terms of the limits in consciousness to which we are all subjected during

physical incarnation. In the realms in which liberated souls operate freely, these limits to no apply. Thus so great a being as “the Queen of the Angels” is able to encompass all children, all mothers, in her loving care.

Healing services invoking the aid of Our Lady are performed in Liberal Catholic churches in many parts of the world, and votive candles glow on many of Her altars. Other rituals, devotions and meditations are undertaken in Her name, and in some churches a short ‘Homage to Our Lady’ is observed before, or sometimes after, the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, for those wishing to participate.

FESTIVALS OF OUR LADY
As observed in The Liberal Catholic Church

The Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple (Candlemas)	Feb 02
The Annunciation of Our Lady	Mar 25
The Visitation of Our Lady	Jul 02
The Assumption of Our Lady	Aug 15
The Nativity of Our Lady	Sep 08
The Immaculate Conception of Our Lady	Dec 08

“May every man bow in reverence before Her temples, may every woman cause Her light to shine upon the world. So shall the Mother-Light heal the wounds of the world, and make it new.”

Bishop George S. Arundale.

COLLECT (prayer) used on THE FESTIVAL OF THE ASSUMPTION OF OUR LADY, as found in the Liturgy of The Liberal Catholic Church (1983, p172).

O LORD Christ, who for her wondrous humility and purity hast exalted the holy Lady Mary among the hosts of heaven; grant that we, thy people may so follow that her most noble example, that we may at the latter end be found worthy to serve thee even as do thy holy angels; thou who livest and reignest in glory for evermore.