

MISSIONARY SERVANTS OF THE POOR

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The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

*“To heaven you ascend, Lady, and
there you will be received with
joyful song”*

THE CHARISM OF THE
MSP

*Obedience makes us Church
(continued)*

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THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

“TO HEAVEN YOU ASCEND, LADY, AND THERE YOU WILL BE RECEIVED WITH JOYFUL SONG”



In this article we present the fourth and last Marian dogma, the Assumption of the Virgin Mary into Heaven.

First, it is important to know where the tradition comes from that led Pope Pius XII to proclaim the dogma. This belief in the Assumption of the Virgin Mary comes from the apocryphal treatise *De Obitu S. Dominae* of the 4th or 5th century. In this writing, attributed to the Apostle Saint John, it is told how the Virgin Mary ascended to Heaven surrounded by the Apostles and first disciples of Jesus. Likewise, the event was recounted by various Holy Fathers, such as Dionysius the Areopagite, Saint Germanus of Constantinople and Saint Peter Damian. The latter went so far as to affirm that the Assumption of the Virgin was more glorious than the Ascension of Jesus. Why? Because the saint said that when Jesus ascended to Heaven the angels welcomed him, while when the Virgin ascended to Heaven it was Jesus himself who welcomed her.

Originally, this feast was called the “Birth into Heaven” or, in the Byzantine tradition, the “Dormition” of Our Lady.



Belief in this event was so deeply rooted in the faith of nations that in 1638 King Louis XIII of France did not hesitate to consecrate his kingdom to the Blessed Virgin under the mystery of her Assumption, declaring her his patron and protector and ordering that her feast day be celebrated with solemn pomp on August 15 each year. It was as a result of a vow made by the king himself, asking for a male child, the future Louis XIV, that this act was carried out. For this reason, a procession called "the Vow of Louis XIII" has been held on August 15 ever since.

However, more than three centuries passed before Pope Pius XII proclaimed the dogma dedicated to Mary assumed into Heaven, body and soul, on November 1, 1950. This privilege of Mary is closely linked to the fact that she is the Mother of Jesus; since death and the corruption of the human body are a consequence of sin, it was not appropriate that the Virgin Mary, free of sin, should be affected by these, hence, the mystery of the "Dormition" or "Assumption into Heaven." The destiny of Mary, united to the transfigured and glorious body of Jesus, will be the destiny of all those who are united to the Lord Jesus in faith and love. The solemnity of the Assumption into Heaven of the Blessed Virgin Mary in body and soul is the eloquent sign that not only the soul but also the body is "something good" (cf. Gen 1:31), to the point that, as happened with the Virgin Mary, our flesh will also be assumed into Heaven.

The dogma defined by Pius XII says:

*After offering up repeated supplications to God and invoking the light of the Spirit of Truth, for the glory of Almighty God who granted the Virgin Mary his special benevolence in honor of his Son, the Immortal King of the ages and conqueror of sin and death, for the greater glory of his august Mother and for the joy and delight of the whole Church, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, of the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and by our own, **we pronounce, declare and define** it as a dogma revealed by God 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 (Pius XII, *Munificentissimus Deus*, November 1, 1950).*

Several years later, during the audiences of July and August 1997, Pope Saint John Paul II explained that, “The dogma of the Assumption affirms that Mary’s body was glorified after her death. In fact, while for other men the resurrection of the body will take place at the end of the world, for Mary the glorification of her body was anticipated by a singular privilege.”

*In these audiences, the Pope recounted that “on November 1, 1950, when defining the dogma of the Assumption, Pius XII did not want to use the term ‘resurrection’ and take a position on the question of the death of the Virgin as a matter of faith. In fact, the bull *Munificentissimus Deus* limits itself to affirming the elevation of Mary’s body to heavenly glory, declaring this truth as a divinely revealed dogma.”*

Now, why is it important for Catholics to remember and delve deeper into the dogma of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into Heaven? The Catechism of the Catholic Church answers this question in number 966: “The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin constitutes a singular participation in the Resurrection of her Son and an anticipation of the resurrection of other Christians.”





"Only the Church discovers in the poor the face of Christ, her Spouse, whom she serves and loves with limitless devotion."



FATHER GIOVANNI SALERNO

THE CHARISM OF THE MSP

Obedience makes us Church (continued)

There are Congregations and Religious Orders that make a vow of obedience and fidelity to the Pope. We do not need to make such a vow because for us it is something intrinsic and innate, since it is an ecclesial Movement and, as such, it has within itself a solemn vow of fidelity to the Pope down to the smallest details. In fact, we were born only to carry out the wishes of the Pope among the poor.

What must characterize each one of us is our fidelity to the Pope and to the Church. For us, obedience to the Holy Father is inherent in the very vocation of Servant of the Poor because as a Movement we were born to “make present” the Pope and the Church among the poor, and we want to remain faithful to this vocation, ready to give our lives and to shed our blood.

You need not be afraid or ashamed to publicly demonstrate and express your fidelity and obedience to the Holy Father, for this fidelity and obedience constitute the *raison d'être* of our charism and the reason for our existence in the Church. For this reason, you will be mocked and greatly criticized, but you should not worry about it.



“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and say all kinds of evil against you falsely because of me. Rejoice and be glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you” (Mt 5:11-12).

Now we, though spiritually poor, are already a reality within the Universal Church. Bishops and cardinals who occupy important positions have noticed us, because they recognize in the humility and simplicity of our charism a mine of holiness for the whole Church. May this support of bishops and prelates not at any time make us pretentious or vainglorious, but rather may it reaffirm us in the reality of humility and poverty, as we become more responsible for the development of the Movement and become ever richer in the holiness of Jesus Christ!

We can nurture great aspirations within ourselves, formulate, and even carry out great projects in favor of the poor, to save the lives of many sick and marginalized people. But if we lack the foundation of humility, meekness and, above all, obedience, we will not be able to be Missionary Servants of the Poor.

To be continued...

Father Giovanni Salerno



"They must not be afraid or ashamed to publicly manifest their fidelity and obedience to the Holy Father, because they constitute the reason for our charism."

NEWS FROM OUR HOUSES

Extraordinary Missions to Southern Peru: Tacna

We arrived in Cairani. It was a 116-mile, 4-hour journey from Tacna to Cairani. It seems like the end of the earth! The parish has a beautiful church with everything needed for liturgical celebrations. The rectory is also well equipped. Some nuns worked here for 15 years. Then, due to a lack of vocations, they had to leave about 15 years ago. Since then, the parish has been attended to from time to time. The diocese of Tacna has few priests and about 45 parishes. It is a desert area.

We also went to Yarabamba, a town near Cala Cala, where there are 80 families. They have a primary and secondary school with 45 students in total.

We entrust these missions to your prayers so that everything will redound to the greater glory of God.

A 96-year-old grandmother in her hut (kitchen) making quaker and inviting us to have a cup. (in the photo)



Repairs continue

Thanks to the generosity of many of you, we have been able to begin the reconstruction of the Saint Tarcisus Home which will allow the children who live there to return home. They are currently living in a temporary house located in the San Jerónimo neighborhood of the city of Cuzco.

We are also moving forward with the reconstruction of the chapel and the Home where the Priests and Brothers live.

We ask for your prayers and help in this very peculiar situation, so that we can continue to serve the poorest.





S.O.S

TO YOUNG PEOPLE

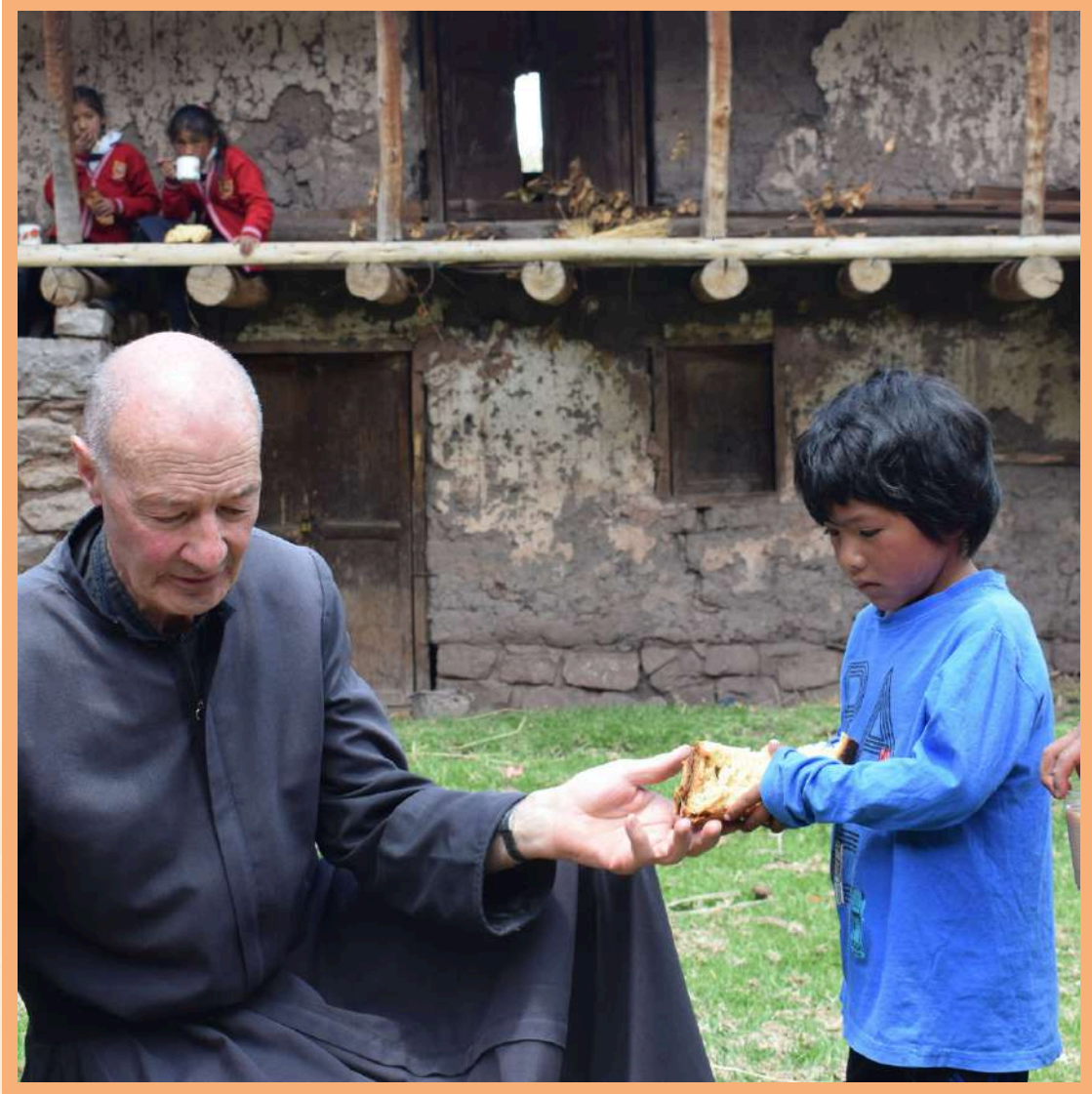
If you are a young person or a married couple, or if you desire to form a support group in your country or to be an oblate, God is calling you. Don't ignore the call and say "yes" to Christ.

contact us!



MISSIONARY ENDEAVOR OF THE MONTH

GO AHEAD! BE PART OF THE MSP WITH
YOUR MISSIONARY COMMITMENT



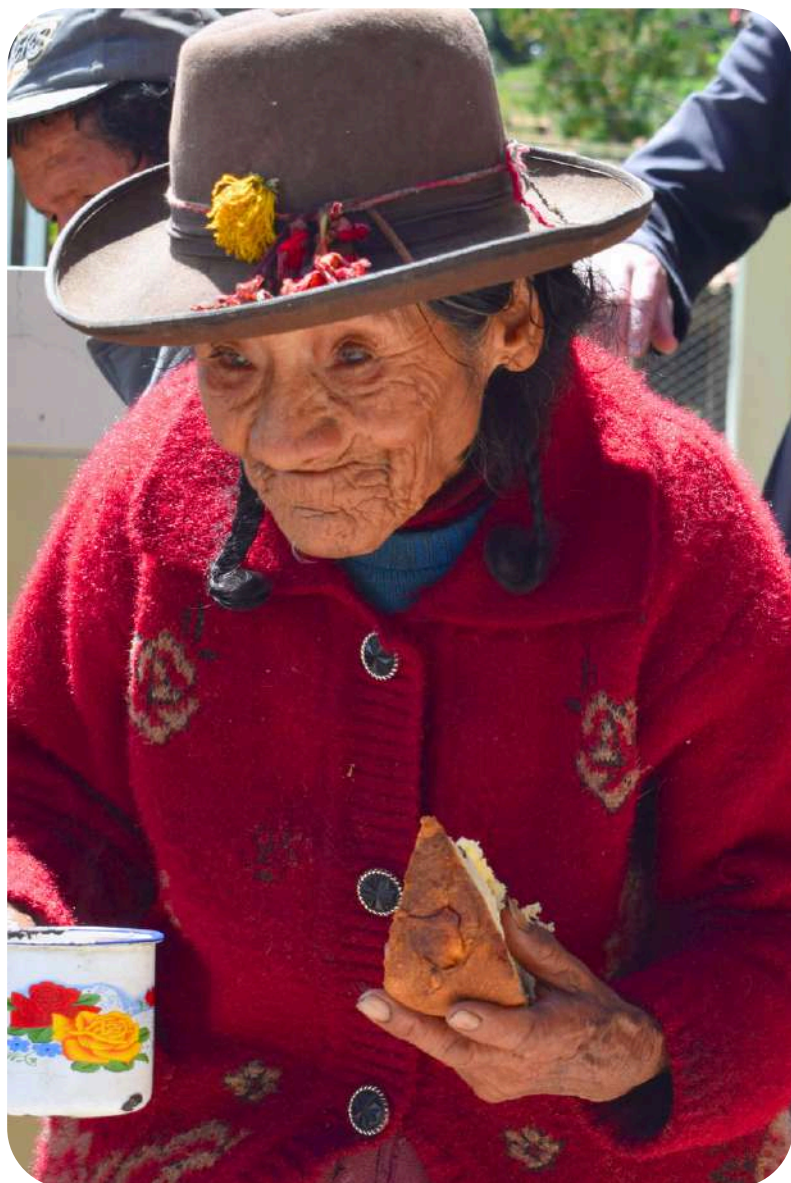
During the month of October, I will offer the Rosary daily to the Virgin Mary for the intentions of the MSP.



WE NEED YOUR PRAYERS

THE MOST
IMPORTANT
HELP FOR THE
MISSIONARIES IS
YOUR PRAYERS

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