

THE ASSUMPTION OF MARY

The assumption of Mary is the doctrine that Mary was taken up bodily into Heaven. Some believers think she died and others think she didn't. The doctrine is essential for being a Roman Catholic. If you wilfully reject it then you are not a Catholic.

The assumption is really about validating the Catholic doctrine of TO JESUS THROUGH MARY. So the Catholic is to avoid having a direct relationship with Jesus. The Catholic confides in Mary and tells her his sins and prays to her and loves and gets devoted to her. If he does that then there is no need for him to establish a relationship with Jesus. Mary is alive and human now so we can relate to her. Hence the need for her assumption.

When a doctrine is question, the Church may issue a definition that makes it dogma or binding on belief. Defining means making it known for certain that the doctrine was revealed by God. Catholics hold that with the death of the last apostle, revelation ceased. So to be able to define a doctrine, the doctrine must be taught in the Bible or in tradition at least by implication if it is not explicitly mentioned. The problem is the Church teaching that it only teaches what is in scripture or tradition. Then if we ask what Church doctrines are in scripture and tradition, the answer is that whatever the Church says is in it. In reality, it is the Church that is heeded and not tradition or scripture. This contradicts the doctrine that revelation ended with the last apostle. Now if Mary died after the last apostle, and nobody knows for sure when she died, then belief in the assumption cannot be binding on us. Also Mary could have died when the apostles were alive and not have been assumed for decades after their deaths. The mere fact that the Church has no right to make such a doctrine as it does not care about tradition or the Bible at all but only pretends it does is proof that the doctrine is not binding on belief.

The legend that the Virgin Mary, the Mother of Jesus Christ, was taken up into Heaven body and soul decades after his resurrection is an old one but not old enough. There is no reason to suppose that it is apostolic in origin and every reason to suppose that it is not. The legend became infallible Roman Catholic doctrine in 1950 under the wily Pope Pius XII. The Pope defined this doctrine. This definition was invalid because the pope and the Church can only define what is definable. There is no evidence that the apostles would have sanctioned such a doctrine. Plus they may have been dead when Mary was assumed meaning the doctrine is not binding on us and that the Catholic Church is inventing new doctrines. The Church says that the Church or the pope are infallible when they define a doctrine. To exercise infallibility, research is required. The Pope didn't even know when Mary died but could only guess so what right had he to declare that it was true that Mary was assumed into Heaven? He was not infallible for he hadn't done his homework - his procedure was incorrect.

"By the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, of the Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, and by our own authority, we pronounce and declare and define it to be a dogma divinely revealed that the Immaculate Mother of God, Mary ever-virgin, on the completion of her earthly life was assumed into Heavenly Glory both in body and soul. Wherefore if anyone presume (though God forbid) wilfully to deny or cast into doubt that which has been defined by us, let him know that he has fallen away entirely from the divine and Catholic faith".

Notice that this really affirms two doctrines. One that Mary was taken to Heaven body and soul and the second was that anybody denying this is not a Catholic believer AT ALL. By implication, the same is true should somebody contradict any other Catholic doctrine. The doctrine that the body and blood of Jesus are physically present in communion is more important so imagine the degree of separation from Catholic faith that the doubter or denier of it would incur.

Some say the assumption points out that Mary was such a perfect role model that she had to be taken body and soul to Heaven as a reward. So Mary is the chief role model for us among the saints. This is madness for we know barely anything about her. Saints whose lives we have detail are better role models. She is a failed role model. Evidence such as this is ignored by the popes.

The Catholic Church believes that infallibility does not give the Church the power to make new doctrine. It gives the Church the power to confirm old doctrines or doctrines that are implied by Church teachings.

In Catholicism, by Fr Richard P McBrien, pages 1102 to 1104, it is noted that when defining that Mary was conceived without sin, Pope Pius IX also said that whoever denies the dogma makes a shipwreck of his or her faith and fallen away from the unity of the Church- that is, become a non-Catholic. Liberal Catholic theologians claim that whoever in the Church denies these dogmas is not necessarily leaving the Church. They could be questioning the inadequacy of the dogmas - that is, considering them to be attempts to put some vague mysteries into words and failing. The theologians say that if they are otherwise good Catholics and don't challenge major doctrines such as that of the redemptive power of the death of Jesus Christ and his resurrection and the existence of God then their denial of the two dogmas cannot put them out

of the Church for the dogmas are not that important. But the liberals say that if a person denies the pope as necessary for the Church and so they are dogmas given by the pope that means the person does not recognise the pope as necessary for the Church and so are putting themselves outside the Church.

To this I have to say some things.

The popes themselves claim to be putting mystery into words. Nobody can deny that Mary was conceived without sin and be excused by the excuse the liberals offer. It is plain enough what the words mean. To deny the definition is to say Mary was a sinner. A similar point can be made about the assumption dogma. Besides, if the mystery excuse works then why can't somebody say that Jesus never died to save and never rose from the dead? Why can't the excuse be used for them? The excuse is just an excuse. And pathetic.

So Pius XII proclaimed with infallibility that Mary went to Heaven body and soul. He didn't say if it was Catholic doctrine that Mary died or not. He just said she was assumed body and soul into Heaven. One would think that the resurrection of Mary from the dead if that is what happened was a more important idea to promulgate and make a dogma than her bodily ascension into Heaven. That he couldn't tell us more makes it all very suspicious.

For the six centuries since the origin of the Church the assumption was not accepted by any of the great teachers of the Church. Only a barmy French bishop gave it any credence. In 380 AD, Gregory of Nyssa began to reason that Mary must have been assumed into Heaven. It is significant that he said nothing about having any evidence for this but he was just indulging in warped pious "reasoning". The Breviary rejected the assumption until the Church decided to delete this rejection in 1570 which does not mean that the Church was starting to think there was something in the story. Benedict XIV said later that the tradition was too weak to be made into an Article of Faith or an infallible doctrine. (See Reason and Belief, page 88-89)

The doctrine springs from a need to make Mary, in effect, the female Christ. The doctrine seems to have originated among the Collyridians. These were heretics who believed in the gospels but treated Mary, who they worshipped as a virgin and Queen of Heaven, as a goddess. They were predominately female. Their Church began in Thrace and spread to the west and the North of the Black Sea and even to Arabia. Epiphanius said that they decorated a square throne and put a linen cloth over it. Then at a time regarded as special and holy they would lay bread on the throne and offer it as a sacrifice in the name of the Queen of Heaven. Then in some kind of communion rite they all ate the bread. The ceremony usually lasted for days. The name Collyridian is a nickname and comes from a word meaning a small loaf. He condemned them for worshipping Mary and he asserted that God did not become man from Mary to make a divine being out of her. He then condemned women priests so the Collyridians had a female priesthood. He even claimed that women could not baptise. It seems that the heresy was an exaggeration of Christian reverence for Mary for there was no evidence that it existed before Epiphanius which implies that it looked orthodox until a thorough investigation was undertaken. The Collyridians as Geoffrey Ashe said appear to have come from a tradition that Mary was immortal and taken up bodily into Heaven like the Prophet Elijah was. St Gregory Nazianzus introduced much of the Church in and around Constantinople to the idea of praying to Mary. Things like that led to the disintegration and absorption of the sect.

It is imagined that when Jesus preserved his mother from all sin from her conception that he wouldn't have let decay touch her body. Nobody knows if the Virgin died or not but most theologians hold the opinion that she did. So, Mary rose from the dead. If Mary died then Jesus could have let her decay. Jesus let himself receive the most degrading death possible so how Catholics could argue that Mary couldn't rot can only be explained by their feeling that they like her better than Jesus. Bodies are decaying by shedding dead cells even when they are alive and when they will be restored to something surpassing even their former glory in the resurrection Mary disintegrating is no big deal. So the Catholic argument for her assumption is incorrect. If the decay of a corpse is degrading it is that because the corpse should be alive so it is death itself that is degrading. It would be hypocritical to be more concerned about preserving the corpse when it was permitted to die.

The doctrine of the assumption is not in the Bible. The apostles were more important than her and they were not assumed into Heaven. Revelation makes them the twelve foundations of Heaven (21:14) which is proof that her importance is exaggerated.

Enoch and Elijah were assumed into Heaven but they could still have died after that. There were better prophets who were not assumed into Heaven which ought to warn Catholics that there is no reason for thinking that when that pair were taken up that the same probably happened to Mary. The Catholic notion that Mary was conceived without sin and was the mother of God so God couldn't let decay touch her body is blasphemous nonsense for God let his own incarnation, Jesus, be crucified and degraded. It implies that Mary must be better than Jesus in a sense!

The Catholic Church says the early Christians never venerated the tomb of Mary where her body was or mentioned it which leads Catholics to suppose that this means she must have been taken up into Heaven. Jerome wrote about holy places in the Holy Land but did not mention the Virgin's tomb. We know that relics and the remains of people considered to be holy were kept by Christians at least from the time the martyr, Polycarp, died. But that was not in Eastern Europe or Israel so the

argument that the Virgin must have went up into Heaven when there were no relics of it is too feeble. There were lots of saints who died and for whom no body parts were kept. And most of the body parts that are kept today are fake relics anyway. There are enough relics claiming to be pieces of the cross to build a ship.

The early Christians did not venerate the mother of Christ and she most likely died in obscurity if she lived at all. Maybe she disappeared because she drowned herself and nobody knew what happened to her? Maybe she died a recluse and nobody knew who she was? There is a similar absence of interest in other New Testament characters. Or perhaps a hoax took place. If Mary's body was stolen from her tomb and people were saying she rose from the dead then there are countless reasons why she could have been stolen.

Even if she had been taken up into Heaven, they would still have pointed out the spot or tomb which would have been the scene of a most wondrous and important miracle – so those who say that the fact that nobody claimed to have Mary's bones means that she rose again or never died are issuing foolishness. They would have been far more likely to honour the place of the assumption if there had been one. The hypocrisy of saying the silence about a tomb means Mary rose while if she had there would be a shrine at her tomb is apparent. If it is true (which it is not) that the assumption of Mary was believed in by the entire early Church (page 168, Born Fundamentalist Born-Again Catholic) then that means the early Church was wholly gullible with regard to alleged resurrections and so would have been as bad with Jesus'. The Hindus at the time generally believed things about gods and what they had done and the Catholics don't believe them and yet the early Church supposedly believing Mary rose proves that she did! That is double-standards I'll tell you!

There are Christian Churches which hold that Mary is buried in a tomb in the Valley of Jehosaphat. In 517 a bishop of Antioch called Severus claimed to have had a revelation that bones in a tomb there were the bones of Mary (page 114, The Marian Conspiracy). He must have been taken seriously for reasons other than his claim to have had a revelation for a shrine grew up that still exists to this day and is kept by schismatic ancient Catholic sects that doubted the assumption of Mary. Father Benedetti was appointed by the Vatican to refute the authenticity of the bones and he seems to have done so. It is possible that the bones of the Virgin were taken away and replaced by bones that were not hers. After all her remains would have made top relics. Benedetti claimed he uncovered evidence of another place where Mary was probably buried and for this the Vatican imposed silence upon him (page 11, The Marian Conspiracy). It is interesting how the Church believes St Helena, Empress of Rome, found the cross and the burial place of Christ and his tomb but denies her claim that she found the place where Mary's was to be found and built a Church there in Ephesus (page 154, The Marian Conspiracy). Until the eighth century, shrine Churches were only built over the tombs of saints. St Helena built such a Church in Ephesus for Mary (page 185, The Marian Conspiracy).

There is no evidence that the assumption was believed in the early Church. It first appears in apocryphal gospels and among heretics centuries after the Church started.

The very early gospel, the Gospel of Thomas refutes the veneration of Mary and her assumption thus, "Saying 114, "Simon Peter said to them, 'Let Mary leave us, for women are not worthy of life.' Jesus said, 'I myself shall lead her in order to make her male, so that she too may become a living spirit resembling you males. For every woman who will make herself male will enter the kingdom of heaven.'" The text is about Magdalene but it shows that those believers would not have seen any reason to honour Jesus' mother. The text says women become male by becoming pure spirit. They must die in order to become disembodied souls like man can. If Mary rose again that would mean that she was excluded from eternal life. It is significant that Jesus said it to Peter who Roman Catholicism regards as the first pope.

If the early Church believed in the assumption, then it might have believed it only as a pious belief or assumption and not as a part of the faith just like Catholics believe Mary appeared at Lourdes as a pious belief but not as part of their faith which consists of dogmas that the light of God shows them are true and without error. This would mean that the pope had no right or authority to make a dogma of the assumption though he claimed the early Church's belief in the assumption justified his action. When Mary says at Medjugorje and those other places that she has a body she is clearly advocating heresy and error and papalism. Don't trust her. Believers that these visions are satanic hoaxes – Satan has to be charming and caring for how else is he going to get you to succumb to temptation? – will get ammunition from the fact that people that touch apparitions find a sensation not like touching a body but like an electric shock!

The Virgin is ignored in the New Testament after a passing reference to her early in the Book of Acts. A bit more could have been said about her. People would be interested in a famous man's mother and yet they ignored her. There must have been some important lessons that they could have seen in her life to make them tell more about her. So, there being no legends about the Virgin's corpse does not infer that she must have risen from the dead.

When Jesus was told that his mother was looking for him he snapped that his hearers were his mother for they did the will of God (Mark 3:31-35). Jesus denied the cult of Mary in the Roman Church. He said that doing God's will was what mattered not being his mother in the physical sense. This tells us that Mary should not be honoured so much just because she gave birth to Jesus. She was not taken up into Heaven for that would be sanctioning devotion to her that God did not

want.

Concerning the doctrine of the Virgin not having original sin and the doctrine of her assumption it has been written, “Over the centuries, it is easy to find both beliefs ignored or opposed by theologians and even saints; they are both present in the Church, but scarcely traditional in the sense of a general acceptance. Nor, of course, can either be traced as far back as the apostolic age” (page 210, *The Virgin*). And of the assumption, “The Assumption doctrine may have gone through a transitional stage. The earliest version of Mary’s Passing ends obscurely: her body is translated to paradise, but nothing is said about its reanimation. Christians may, at first, have accepted that her deceased remains were nowhere on earth, but hesitated to go the rest of the way” (page 248, notes on Chapter 9, *ibid*).

The Catholics teach that Mary was taken up into Heaven to be crowned Queen. She is now the Queen of Heaven. But God wants us to love him alone and to love others in so far as it is useful to him so Mary must do that when she is in Heaven. He does not need a Queen. When God’s will is all she is interested in and he is boss then she is not a real queen at all. To be queen means to have authority and she has none. She is like many of the queens in history who were married to kings who ruled making them mock queens only even these ladies had more power than she had. So, if Mary is a real Queen she is the real God or at least a part-time God or a half-God.

The evidence for the assumption of Mary is truly dreadful. That Pius XII made this doctrine a dogma that Catholics are bound to believe indicates that the Church is abolishing its traditional stance regarding miracles. This stance says that if there is any doubt the miracle must not be declared to be true by the Church and the evidence needs to be conclusive. This is because a miracle is so unusual and rare and out of respect for God fraud and error must be eliminated lest a work he never performed be attributed to him.

If Mary existed then she is dead. The pope then is not infallible. The Church which declared him infallible is not infallible either. Catholicism is a hoax.

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