

The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary – August 14/15, 2019 – Reflection

At the very end of last month, my aunt, who has been having a great deal of trouble seeing over the past few years, finally had the corneal transplant surgery that would restore most of her sight. The surgery was as successful as the doctors dared hope, but the results were not all wonderful. As my aunt was able to see more clearly, she gazed into the mirror at her reflection. She was horrified. She let out a gasp and burst into tears. Her sister who was helping her out during her recovery ran into my aunt's bedroom and asked what was wrong. All my newly-sighted aunt could blubber out was, "Wrinkles ... horrible, ugly, awful wrinkles!!!" My other aunt, to calm her down and make her feel better said, "Oh those! We've seen you with those wrinkles for years and we like you with them!" I'm not so sure how consoled my aunt was with that particular pep talk!!!

At the chapel at St. John's University in New York, there is a statue of the Blessed Mother Mary as the Seat of Wisdom ... very appropriate for the setting on a college campus, a place of higher learning. She is depicted sitting in a large bench with a book open on her lap. She is no longer the young virgin of the Annunciation, but much older now, her face lined with the wrinkles that came from the years and work and worries and losses of a lifetime. But her eyes ... they seem to sparkle with a youthful curiosity and the fire of wisdom attained ... as if she is looking, not in the mirror of age and mortality, but into the promise of life and light forever, basking in the glow of the throne of God her

Father, wrapped once again in the arms of her dearly beloved Son, in a heaven where there are no more tears, no more sadness.

It has been the tradition of the Church from its earliest days to hold this day as true: that Mary, the Mother of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, was, at her death in this earthly life, raised body and soul into heaven. She, the first among our race, the Mother of the New Creation born from the blood and water that flowed from the wounded side of her crucified Son, has blazed the trail that all faithful followers of Jesus her Son will travel at this life's end and at the end of time.

The beauties and comforts, the youth and vitality of this life to which all of us cling so desperately, will wrinkle and pass away. But in Mary's Assumption, we gain wisdom and see our ultimate destiny ... "Death where is your victory, O death, where is your sting?!" Where she has gone, we shall surely follow.

Having trouble accepting what's looking back at you in the mirror?

Hey, He's seen you with those for years and He loves you with them!!