

Dear Mission Partners:

The Feast of the Assumption is one of the most important feast days of the year and a Holy Day of Obligation on the official Catholic Church calendar. According to Catholic theology, Mary was "assumed body and soul into heavenly glory" several years after her son, Jesus, ascended into heaven. Mary did not die! Moreover, the importance of this event in Mary's life is only surpassed by her role in the virgin birth of Jesus Christ.

In the Eastern Church, the miracle of the Assumption is called the "falling asleep of the Virgin" or the "Dormition of Mary." By either name, the day marks Mary's triumph over earthly existence. Here is the icon:



If you are "down the shore" and on the beach on August 15, you can't miss the "Blessing of the Sea" hosted by parishes either near Atlantic City, Ocean City, or Wildwood, that happens on the feast of Mary's Assumption! There is a legend which holds that when Mary was assumed into heaven she wept, and her tears landed in the ocean. To this day, people take a dip in the ocean on August 15<sup>th</sup> and believe that Mary will intercede on her annual feast, for their good health.

After the vigil or the morning Mass for the Assumption, the celebration continues with a procession to the beach where the bishop or the pastor, will get into a boat and toss a ring-shaped wreath of flowers into the water to symbolize the wedding of the Church with the Sea.

**Atlantic City area (Ventnor):** <http://weddingofthesea.org/schedule-of-events/>

**In Ocean City:** <https://stdamienparish.com/events/blessing-of-the-sea/>

**In Wildwood** (buses are provided after Mass to the beach for the blessing):

<https://notredamedelamer.org/events/2021/feast-assumption-blessing-sea>

August Blessings, everyone!

Sister Antoine Therese, IHM

