

Mystic Moon

Sermon Transcript • May 14, 2026

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

“And when He had said these things, while they looked on, He was raised up: and a cloud received Him out of their sight.”

Dearest friends, today is the feast of the Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ. But this year, it is also the Thursday after the second Sunday in Mary’s month. So today we continue our mini-catechesis on the Blessed Virgin. And today’s catechesis concerning the glory of the Blessed Virgin proceeds by way of contrast.

“And the Lord Jesus, after He had spoken to them, was taken up into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God.”

Let’s start with the two New Testament snippets just given. In these two brief verses—Saint Luke in the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, verse 10, and Saint Mark in the 19th verse of the final chapter of his Gospel—provide incredibly succinct accounts of the Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Despite their brevity, these accounts are dense with meaning and significance, and in them lay many treasures of the Depositum Fidei, chief among these being the simple affirmations:

“He was raised up: and a cloud received Him out of their sight.”

“And the Lord Jesus, after He had spoken to them, was taken up into Heaven.”

But, my dear friends, in order to appreciate the significance of these two brief accounts regarding the Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ—and their bearing upon the glory of the Blessed Virgin—it is necessary that we recall Our Lord’s doctrine regarding the entirety of His earthly life, His Passion, His death, and His Resurrection.

“Jesus answered Pilate: Thou shouldst not have any power against Me, unless it were given thee from above.”

“Therefore doth the Father love Me: because I lay down My life, that I may take it again. No man taketh it away from Me: but I lay it down of Myself, and I have power to lay it down: and I have power to take it up again. This commandment have I received of My Father.”

And it is incumbent upon us to recognize that this doctrine holds within its bosom another doctrine: that the Lord Jesus Christ, because He is God, is in control of every detail concerning His existence.

He was in control of His virginal conception and birth. He was in control of His sinless life—a life lived in perfect submission to His Father. He was in control of His Passion. He was in control of His death, and the fact that His Body did not undergo any corruption while it lay in Joseph of Arimathea’s unused, recently-hewed tomb. He was in control of His Resurrection. And finally, He was in control of His Ascension into Heaven.

All these aspects of His life were completed by His own power, because He is divine.

“And it came to pass, as He spoke these things, a certain woman from the crowd, lifting up her voice, said to Him: Blessed is the womb that bore Thee, and the paps that gave Thee suck. But He said: Yea rather, blessed are they who hear the word of God, and keep it.”

But you might be asking: How does any of this relate to the glory of the Blessed Virgin? And the answer is both simple and straightforward.

In a way parallel to His own control of the details of His own life by nature, Our Lord has deigned to allow Our Lady, by grace, to enjoy a life that radiates in a superlative manner something of His own.

And it is because of this singular grace that Our Lady was immaculately conceived—conceived without the stain of original sin on her soul. Because of this singular grace, the Blessed Virgin enjoyed a conception that reflects something of the pristine character of Our Lord's own.

Similarly—and this follows upon that first grace—Our Lady was afforded, and accepted, the possibility of a life free from actual personal sin. And she lived, in fact, that sin-free life. She was the one who heard the word of God and kept it most eminently.

And finally, having enjoyed these two graces, Our Lord granted His Holy Mother a third: that after her earthly life was finished, Our Lady was assumed, body and soul, into Heaven.

Put another way, many of the things that Our Lord did by His own power for Himself, He did by grace for the Blessed Virgin.

Friends, it is for this reason, and several more, that Saint Francis de Sales sings the glories of Our Lady's impact upon all those who have the good fortune of being in her presence or of drawing near to her. Thus, when speaking of Saint Joseph, Saint Francis de Sales said:

“Saint Joseph surpassed the Angels and Saints in purity. For if, being exposed for a few days only to the heat of the material sun, the lily acquires its dazzling whiteness, who can conceive the extraordinary degree of purity to which Saint Joseph was exalted, exposed as he was day and night, for so many years, to the rays of the Sun of Justice and to that mystical moon which derives all her splendor from Him?”

Dear friends, today is Ascension Thursday, and on this day Holy Mother Church bids us to consider the glory of Our Lord Jesus Christ as He, by His own power, takes leave of the earth and returns to the right hand of the Father.

And because this day falls within Our Lady's month, our Heavenly Father rejoices, too, as we are made to see anew how the shining splendor of the rays of His Divine Son, Jesus, are reflected in the brilliant light of the Mystic Moon, the Blessed Virgin Mary.

So on Ascension Thursday, as we continue our contemplation of the glory of Our Lady, and as we come to receive upon our tongues and in our persons the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, let us beseech God the Father to grant us the grace to bask in Our Lady's brilliant light, and so make us fit to share in the glory of the Ascension of His only-begotten Son, saying:

“Grant, we beseech, Almighty God, that we who believe Thine only-begotten Son, our Redeemer, to have ascended on this day into Heaven, may also ourselves dwell in mind amid heavenly things. Through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Our Lord, who with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth, God, world without end. Amen.”

Saint Francis de Sales, pray for us.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us.

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.