



Immaculate Conception  
Church

## Homily for the Feast of the Assumption

Year A 2014

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Several years ago a shocking event took place at a resort beach in France. The beach was packed with visitors. Two twelve-year-old girls went swimming and were trapped in an unexpected undertow. Tragically the girls could not be rescued in time to save their lives.

The bodies of these two little girls, who had come to the beach on their own, were laid down on the sand and each was covered by a beach towel. The towel did not measure the length of their bodies. Their faces were covered but their feet were not.

And here's what was so shocking...all the people around these two small bodies kept partying, sunbathing, cavorting, drinking and conversing. It was as if these bodies were not even there. They were paid no respect, everyone continued their day as if it were just another day at the beach.

How callous our world has become. How cheap we have made the gift of life. Sometimes the only life that seems to be important is our own. Beyond that, we sometimes could care less. We can walk by the homeless, pay no attention to the cry of the poor, be unmoved by the willful destruction of life in the womb, be inattentive to the loneliness of the elderly, the sick and the unloved. We live as if the violence in Israel and Palestine has little to do with our lives. We categorize and act prejudicially toward countless human beings. Life in our world is cheap. But this is not how it is supposed to be.

God loves and cherishes the gift of life above all else. Our life...our life both as individuals and as a people...is the greatest gift that God gives to us. Christ came out of love for us. And Christ died and rose from the dead to bring us new life...a life that never ends. Our life is so precious that God promises us that we shall continue our life in the world to come.

This is the meaning of today's Feast. Mary is assumed into heaven to be the first to share in the victory of her Son. The care that God has for her life is meant to be a sign of the care that God has for all our lives...for life itself. Mary's Assumption is meant to teach us not only how sacred life will be in the world yet to come...but also how sacred life is in the moment – today – now.

The shocking insensitivity of our world cannot and should never be tolerated by those who have faith. To celebrate this Feast of Mary is to learn from God that all life is sacred and must be treasured, honored and respected at all times and in all places. And that means by us. No exceptions are possible.