

Staff Prayer Ritual in the week of the Assumption of Mary (15th August) OUTLINE of Ritual

We Gather: *Welcome*
Sign of the Cross
Lighting of Candles
Gathering Song
Opening Prayer

We Listen: *Scripture Reading*
A Paraphrase
Sharing

We Respond: *Intercessions*
Closing Prayer

We Go Forth: *Blessing*
Dismissal
Sign of Peace

The Environment

Ideally, set out chairs in a circle – creating a space that where people can be present to one another. Three candles are placed near (or on) a small table in the centre of the circle. It is on this small table that the bible rests open.

You will need:

- ✓ a Leader of prayer; a Reader (who will read from the Bible); a second Reader for the Paraphrased reading; 5 Readers for the Intercessions; a person to light the prayer candles at the beginning of prayer
- ✓ a Bible (open at the Reading) on a small table
- ✓ 3 candles + matches
- ✓ handouts for each staff member
- ✓ full text of the ritual for the Leader
- ✓ recording of the song with a speaker and a person to organise the music at the appropriate time.
- ✓ Song words for each participant (with © appropriately acknowledged)

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We Gather

Welcome & Introduction

Leader: This week, we affirm our belief that Mary is now in Heaven.

This feast of Mary originated in a sixth century feast of the Dormition or 'Falling asleep of Mary'. By the seventh century the feast became known as the Assumption of Mary.

The date of this feast commemorated a very ancient harvest festival towards the end of summer, which gave thanks to the Earth Mother for her fertility in producing the harvest.

The feast of the Assumption commemorates the glorification of Mary, chosen by God, to be the mother of Jesus the Christ. The feast acquired a special status as a feast of Mary when Pius XII in 1950 defined the assumption as a dogma of faith.

On this feast we are encouraged to affirm our humanity and work to enhance the dignity of people as daughters and sons of God.

(Taken from *Stories and Seasons: Saints and Feasts for Catholic Schools and Parishes* by Kevin Treston)

Sign of the Cross

Leader: Mary accepted God wholeheartedly into her life. Let us open ourselves to God through the Sign of the Trinity who dwells within us.

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Lighting of the 3 Candles

A person lights the 3 Candles as the group sing the Song ...

Gathering Song

The group sings a suitable Marian Hymn as a gathering song: (e.g. [Among All](#), by Chris de Silva.)

Opening Prayer

Leader: Let us pray ...

**All: Almighty Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
you have revealed the beauty of your power
by exalting the lowly virgin of Nazareth
and making her the mother of our Saviour.
May the prayers of this woman clothed with the sun
bring Jesus to the waiting world
and fill the void of incompleteness with the presence of her child,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

We Listen

Scripture Reading

Reader 1: Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,
for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant.
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.

"He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;
he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.
"He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
according to the promise he made to our ancestors.
to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

A Paraphrase

Reader 2: [*A Magnificat of Waiting ...*](#)

Ann Johnson in *Miryam of Nazareth - Woman of Strength and Wisdom*
Ave Maria Press Notre Dame Indiana, 1984. (79-80).

Sharing

Leader: What speaks to you from a word or a line in either of these Readings?

Group members respond in pairs and/or with the whole group as they are comfortable.

We Respond

Intercessions

Leader: God, our Wisdom, Source of our Peace,
Your true disciple is the one who listens to your Word. Hear us as we pray:

All: Our souls proclaim the greatness of God!

Reader: May the leaders of our Church show us by their word and example that God is to
be praised in all we do ...

All: The Almighty has done great things for us!

Reader: May we work to ensure that the gifts of Creation are more evenly distributed
among the peoples of the earth ...

All: God's mercy reaches from age to age!

Reader: May we reflect your mercy through our work of reconciliation between black and
white Australia, and in the welcome we give to refugees who come to our
shores...

All: The hungry God has filled with good things!

Reader: May the bread of Christ, broken for a better world, bring together all those estranged or divided in the name of religion, so that together we may share in the Feast which God has prepared for the hungry.

All: With Mary, we rejoice in God our Saviour!

Reader: We offer the prayers we hold in the silence of own hearts ... PAUSE ...

Closing Prayer

Leader: Let us pray ...

**All: Empowering God,
Inspire us by the example of Mary's openness to your Love.
May we live in this attitude and bring to birth a new world!
We make our prayer through Jesus Christ in the unity of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

We Go Forth

Blessing

Leader: May God do great things in us and enrich us with abundant blessings.

All: Amen.

Leader: May God's mercy reach out to all we meet.

All: Amen.

Leader: May we be filled with the joys of the Spirit and the gifts of our eternal home.

All: Amen.

Leader: May almighty God bless us, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: AMEN!

Dismissal

Leader: Go forth to proclaim the greatness of God in all you do today.

All: Thanks be to God!

Sign of Peace

Leader: Grateful for the freedom that we know today,
Let us offer each other a Sign of Peace. ...

