

Patrons of Parishes

ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN

THE death, resurrection and Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary are three marvels which the Church believes with perfect confidence, teaches throughout the world and celebrates in sacred liturgy. Thus, in 1870, the Fathers of the Council of the Vatican unanimously asked the Sovereign Pontiff Pius IX to define the Assumption of the Virgin as a dogma of faith and the Holy Father would have done so had he not been compelled to interrupt the Council.

Although preserved from original sin, the Mother of God had to undergo the sentence of death pronounced against our race in order that she might resemble her divine Son who wished to suffer death for our salvation. But, say the Fathers and Theologians with one voice, that death was caused neither by disease nor by old age. It was not due to disease which never had any effect on the Immaculate Virgin ; it was not due to old age because although, at her death, Mary was sixty three years old in the opinion of some and seventy three in the opinion of others, she had retained the strength, the freshness and the beauty of her youth. Neither was martyrdom her lot ; she had a'ready deserved the title of Queen of Martyrs by her anguish at the foot of the cross of her beloved Jesus.

The sole cause of her death was divine love whose heavenly warmth separated her soul from her body with as much strength as gentleness. Holy Writ tells us that Moses, full of vigor, ascended Mount Nebo, by God's command and there gave up his spirit, not in the pains of a death agony, but in the delicious embraces of the Lord. *Mortuus est Moyses in osculo Domini.* Mary's soul soared away from her body in a still more marvellous manner, in a kiss from her son Jesus. From the time of our Lord's Ascension, God's will alone prevented