

## Feast of Assumption 2018

Tonight we celebrate a great Feast about the consequences of lifelong choices for God. So often when we experience the end of life on this planet, we are tempted to rightly ask, is this it? The Feast of the Assumption is God's response to that question. It is a resounding no! The end of our lived experience here is not the end. There is so much more than our lived experience.

I was wondering today why this great thing that happened to Mary has such meaning for all of us. Somehow what happened to this one person happens collectively to all of us. Which is why what is going on in our Church today is so distressing. Many of you have heard of the sex abuse scandal in the Church. Today we've learned more details about the severity of these horrific deeds. It is heartbreaking, disgusting, and demoralizing. And what one person does somehow has an impact on all of us. We are all victims.

But this is not the end of the story. God will have the last word. I'm experiencing this as a crucifixion; the priesthood is naked on the cross, humiliated. Perhaps the Church the way it exists today must die in order to resurrect as a new creation. I have had my faith in the Church shaken, but not my faith in God. I still believe that the Holy Spirit is with us. I have no idea what the Spirit is up to; but I know that God will not abandon us.

Scripture tells us that “I will strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered.” I believe that the only way we will weather this storm is by uniting together. WE are the Body of Christ on earth and WE will make this right. The hierarchy alone cannot do this; they need you to hold them accountable and to help them through this. We cannot forget that there are good priests and good bishops and there are bad ones. Please don't let the bad priests destroy your faith; don't let them win. This is not the end.