

- It was my hope that, on this auspicious occasion of our parish's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we would be able to dedicate our new mural. Alas, this was not to be. So while we've been waiting a full year and half for this mural, we shall have to wait just a bit longer.
- Learning to wait and to be patient is good for us, though. Waiting patiently teaches us to be long-suffering and increases our endurance. The trick to waiting patiently is to keep one's mind focused on the good things to come.
- And really, that's the whole point of our mural. My hope is that by having an artistic rendering of Heaven ever before us, we can keep focused on Heaven so that we might truly long and hope for it.
- As I mentioned last Sunday, the centerpiece of the mural will be Jesus the Lamb of God, shown standing triumphantly upon an altar, while blood pours forth from His wounded breast into a golden chalice.
- This particular image of Christ is not simply a reminder of the price Christ paid for our sins, but it's also an invitation for us to go to Him to receive forgiveness for our sins and mercy for the punishment due for them.
- Christ Jesus was wounded by our sins so that we might be healed of them! Truly, Jesus desires that all of us go to Him for healing, strength, and consolation, for His Most Sacred Heart is the font of all mercy and love.
- He invites all of us to press our lips to His wounded side and drink deeply of the saving blood and water that flow forth from it.
- Hopefully this image of Christ the Paschal Lamb will lead us to meditate on the Paschal Mystery of our Lord's passion, death, and resurrection, and all the benefits we glean from it as members of His Body, for this is the foundation of our hope as Christians.
- We *can* hope for Heaven because Jesus suffered, died, and rose again! For the past 60 years, we as a parish family have shared in this hope for Heaven.
- And as we go forward as a parish family, I hope that we will live our common life together as a parish in a manner that might make us worthy of Heaven. I hope that we can always love, honor, and trust our Lord as we should.
- Of course, in His immense generosity, our Lord desires that we also love, honor, and trust His Mother, because Jesus knows that when we do, she always leads us back to Him so that we might take our part in His great work of redemption.
- Mary always leads us back to the pierced Heart of her Son so that can drink deeply of the love, mercy, and forgiveness He offers to all who are repentant.
- Considering the importance of Our Lady in the life of the Church, it seems a wonderful bit of Providence that our parish was founded on such a glorious feast day of Our Lady.
- Because St. Ann, our patroness, is the mother of our Lady, our parish necessarily has a Marian character, and so it's fitting that we were founded on such a glorious feast day as today's.
- While all the feast days of Our Lady are glorious, what I love about the Assumption is that this feast doesn't just recall an important event in Mary's life or honor a particular fact about her. This feast day points us toward Heaven!
- Today we celebrate that most glorious moment in the life of the Mother of God when, after the course of her earthly life was over, she was assumed body and soul into the glory of Heaven to be united with our Lord and crowned Queen of Heaven and Earth.

- Immaculately conceived and persevering in perfect and sinless innocence throughout the entire course of her life, at her death Mary was accorded this one final favor from our Lord of being preserved free from the corruption of the tomb so that she might triumph over death.
- In this favor we see the magnificent heights to which our human nature – persevering in virtue and steadfast in the pursuit of holiness – can be raised. In Mary’s Assumption we see the true beauty and dignity of our human nature.
- While the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary is a unique privilege meant for Our Lady alone, we find in this mystery encouragement in our own longing for Heaven.
- Indeed, the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary reminds us that we are all called to Heavenly glory; we are called to be saints!
- In her Assumption Mary shows us the way to Heaven, and from her place in Heaven she so capably aids us on our journey there. She helps to form us into saints!
- Unequaled in her love for God and in her capacity to procure the divine assistance, our Lady is also unwavering in her love for us and therefore procures and hands on to us every grace our Lord grants.
- And so we should entrust ourselves completely to her maternal care: calling upon her, relying upon her, and trusting in her maternal love and protection. For doing so really is: “the surest, easiest, shortest, and the most perfect means” to becoming a saint (St. Louis de Montfort).
- For the past 33 days many of us in this parish have been preparing to consecrate ourselves to Jesus through Mary. After Mass today we will pray together our prayer of consecration.
- We will renew our baptismal vows, and we will give ourselves totally to Mary and ask that she make use of us according to God’s divine will.
- As your pastor, I solemnly promise you, that if you are faithful to your consecration promise throughout your life, you will go to Heaven at the end of your life. Our Lady will never fail one who is truly her child.
- My brothers and sisters, as we celebrate this magnificent feast in honor of our Lady, and as we celebrate our 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a parish family, let us give thanks to our Lord for His many gifts to us.
- Let us thank Him for His Paschal Mystery, for His willingness to suffer, die, and rise again for us, and for the mercy and forgiveness He so freely bestows upon the contrite of heart. And let us always stay close to His wounded Heart.
- But let us also thank our Lord for the great gift of mother, and let us each one entrust ourselves whole-heartedly to her maternal care.
- With the help of her mother and our patroness, St. Ann, may Our Lady always leads us to the Heart of Her Son.
- O Mary, gloriously assumed into Heaven, pray for us!