



St Marylebone
Parish Church

The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary 2020

St Mary the mother of Jesus is our patron. It is especially appropriate for us here at St Mary-le-bourne to call her her traditional English title: *Our* Lady. That is exactly what she is, Our Lady

Ever since I discovered the meaning of our title, St Mary-Le-Bone I have been unable to get images out of my head. St Mary by the Bourne, the river.

Our Lady by the Tyburn river - the location of our church building. Our medieval church on the river bank.

But straight away in my mind's eye I had Her, St Mary herself, a young Palestinian Jewish woman by the river: washing, collecting water, chatting, *actually* running the community and family as has always been the case!

It is *this* woman of faith, care, power and determination, the one of whom the Prophet Isaiah had spoken 800 years before, the one who said yes to the Archangel Gabriel, her, **we celebrate being assumed, body and soul, into heaven.**

She is where we shall be.

She shows us the way. As we celebrate her assumption she shows us 3 things in particular:

1. She shows us our destination, what we're living towards: life perfectly with and in God and the Communion of Saints.

2. She shows us our daily reality, too: 'fiat'. See the window of Our Lady of Tyburn – 'fiat': 'Let it be unto me' she said, 'according to thy word'. She shows us the pattern for uniting our will with God's. Losing ourselves in His love, and finding our true selves there. 'Let it be unto me', we learn day by day, step by step to say.

3. She shows us that wherever, whoever, however, we are: we belong to a family. God's family. The family of the Saints in heaven and the Church on earth. We are never alone, we never need feel lost or abandoned. Whatever happens, our family is here in the Church on earth, and it is the Saints and angels, to whom we're headed.

Our relationship with Our Lady Mary, then, is not an 'ology', not a controversy, not a matter of churchy taste or theological preference. **She's our friend**, our patroness, our mother as children of her Father, as brothers and sisters of her Son.

I commend you to her friendship and care. And pray that on this feast you might allow her to point us the way forwards - as mother's at their best always do.

She points us today to our belonging to this great Eucharistic family of the Church, and to our destiny where she has gone before us, and in her footsteps to a life lived enveloped in the love of the Father. Thanks be to God.