

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin into Heaven

Written by W.J.Pais

Regarding the day, year, and manner of [Our Lady's](#) death, nothing [certain](#) is [known](#). The earliest

[known](#)

literary reference to the Assumption is found in the Greek work
De Obitu S. Dominae

[Catholic](#)

[faith](#)

, however, has always derived our

[knowledge](#)

of the

[mystery](#)

from

[Apostolic Tradition](#)

[Epiphanius](#)

(d. 403) acknowledged that he

[knew](#)

nothing definite about it (*Haer.*, lxxix, 11). The

[dates](#)

assigned for it vary between three and fifteen years after

[Christ's Ascension](#)

. Two cities claim to be the place of her departure:

[Jerusalem](#)

and Ephesus. Common consent favours

[Jerusalem](#)

, where her

[tomb](#)

is shown; but some argue in favour of Ephesus. The first six centuries did not

[know](#)

of the

[tomb of Mary](#)

at

[Jerusalem](#)

The [belief](#) in the corporeal assumption of [Mary](#) is founded on the [apocryphal](#) treatise *De Obitu S. Dominae*

, bearing the name of

[St. John](#)

, which belongs however to the fourth or fifth century. It is also found in the book

De Transitu Virginis

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, falsely ascribed to

[St. Melito of Sardis](#)

, and in a spurious letter attributed to

[St. Denis the Areopagite](#)

. If we consult

[genuine](#)

writings in the

[East](#)

, it is mentioned in the

[sermons](#)

of

[St. Andrew of Crete](#)

,

[St. John Damascene](#)

, St. Modestus of Jerusalem and others. In the

[West](#)

,

[St. Gregory of Tours](#)

(De gloria mart., I, iv) mentions it first. The

[sermons](#)

of

[St. Jerome](#)

and

[St. Augustine](#)

for this

[feast](#)

, however, are spurious.

[St. John of Damascus](#)

(P.G., I, 96) thus formulates the

[tradition](#)

of the

[Church](#)

of

[Jerusalem](#)

:

St. Juvenal, [Bishop](#) of [Jerusalem](#), at the [Council of Chalcedon](#) (451), made known to the [Emperor Marcian](#)

and

[Pulcheria](#)

, who wished to possess the body of the

[Mother of God](#)

, that

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Mary

died in the presence of all the

Apostles

, but that her

tomb

, when opened, upon the request of

St. Thomas

, was found empty; wherefrom the

Apostles

concluded that the body was taken up to

heaven

Today, the belief in the corporeal assumption of Mary is universal in the East and in the West

; according to

Benedict XIV

(De Festis B.V.M., I, viii, 18) it is a probable opinion, which to deny were impious and blasphemous

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