

(See also 20 May)

- 1 Today is the Feast of what is called the “Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into Heaven”. We can think of this feastday as Jesus saying to Mary: “Welcome home, Mother!”
- 2 A story was written 800 years ago about a man who was a juggler and acrobat, who felt called to become a monk. He joined the monastery and prayed in his heart to God.
- 3 He wanted to pray with the other monks and join in the same words, but he found it very difficult because the Mass and other prayers at that time were spoken in Latin. It worried him that he wasn’t able to join in the prayers. Did this mean that he couldn’t pray? All he felt he could do was juggle and jump and turn somersaults and dance.
- 4 One day he discovered a small chapel in the crypt under the monastery church. There he could pray and no-one would see him. He was praying there silently one day at midday when he heard the monastery bell ring to summon the monks to pray together in the church above. The juggler remained where he was. He began to cry as he heard his brother-monks pray and sing together. Then he prayed before a statue of Our Lady: “*Holy Mary,*” he said “*pray for me now and always. All I can do is juggle and jump and turn somersaults and dance. What I have learned to do, I will now do well for you. Accept this now as my prayer before you.*” And then he began to juggle and jump and turn somersaults and dance before the statue of the Virgin Mary, whilst the other monks prayed and sang in the way that **they** knew best in the church above.
- 5 Every day he prayed in this way in the small chapel at midday. The other monks knew that he went there each day, but he never spoke of what he did. One day another monk followed him, annoyed that he was not praying with the others. He hid behind a pillar. Then, as the monastery bell began to ring, our friend bowed before the statue representing the Virgin Mary and started to juggle and jump and turn somersaults and dance, and did so until he fell to the ground with exhaustion.
- 6 The monk who had followed, felt disturbed at what he had seen and went to tell the abbot (the head of the monastery) who swore him to tell no-one what had happened. The following day the abbot himself hid behind a pillar and watched as his brother-monk juggled and jumped and turned somersaults and danced before the image of the Virgin Mary. And, as the abbot looked, he saw Our Lady herself appear before the monk, and she took a cloth and began to fan the monk to cool him from the exhaustion of his juggling and jumping and turning somersaults and dancing. No-one more beautiful had the abbot ever seen, and he saw that the Lady had great concern and care for the monk who had prayed to her.
- 7 The following day the abbot asked to see the monk, who thought he was going to be criticised for not joining the other monks at their midday prayer. The abbot greeted the monk and set his mind at rest. “*Pray for me,*” said the abbot, “*and I, too, will pray for you. My dear friend, I have seen how you have prayed to Our Lady. Pray in this way in the monastery church with your brothers present, so that they may be blessed and see the holiness of your prayer.*”

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8 *And so we pray today:*

Mary, our Mother,  
your total giving of yourself  
reminds us  
that we hold in trust  
from God our Father  
all our accomplishments  
and talents and gifts  
- trusted as we are  
to offer them in his service,  
and bring happiness and well-being  
to our brothers and sisters.

Your "Yes" to God's invitation  
to be the mother of his Son  
reminds us  
that prayer is not just words  
but is from the heart.

We ask you to pray to Jesus for us  
that the Holy Spirit  
may live fully in us, too,  
so that we may pray  
in the way that each of us finds best.

So may we be prepared to join you  
in saying "Yes" to God our Father,  
that Jesus may be born anew  
in our hearts.

Amen.

This is an excerpt from the page of this date in  
*'Praying Each Day of the Year'*,  
a 3-volume book  
by Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC.

For details:

<http://www.matthew-james.co.uk/>

Could make use of a search engine  
to research this topic further.

This material is part of  
the prayer and education website  
of the De La Salle Brothers  
in Great Britain:

[www.prayingeachday.org](http://www.prayingeachday.org)