



ASSUMPTION OF OUR LADY

AT VESPERS, BEFORE THE PROCESSION OF KING LOUIS XIII's VOW

Homily of the Right Reverend Dom Jean PATEAU
Abbot of Our Lady of Fontgombault
(Fontgombault, August 15th, 2026)

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
My dearly beloved Sons,

THE VOW we are going to fulfil in this procession is in honour of the commitment made in 1632 by King Louis XIII to consecrate his kingdom to Our Lady, should she grant him the grace of an heir. The future Louis XIV, nicknamed “Dieudonné” (God-given), was born on September 5th, 1638.

By addressing Mary, the king was aware that he was addressing a receptive ear, that of a mother towards her children.

Today, there is no longer a king on the throne of France, and our leaders seem totally unconcerned with entrusting the future of our country to Mary. The very word “future” seems to ring hollow, since many of our leaders are apostles, or at least accomplices, of the culture of death, as evidenced by the recent approval of the legislation on euthanasia and assisted suicide. Once again, with the government’s support, members of Parliament have enshrined in the French law the possibility of deliberately causing the death of an innocent human being.

Two looks are taken on our so deeply wounded humanity. The first one is that of the devil, who shows his deep contempt for mankind by dragging us into a maelstrom of depravity, then abandoning us to our

fate. His aim: to make us believe that life is no longer worth living; that the only way out is self-destruction.

Conversely, God raises up the wounded man, invites him to hope, and reminds him that it is always time to love. In this work, God likes to get help first and foremost from Our Lady, Mother of God and Mother of men, Queen of heaven and earth; she who smiles upon the conception of each human life, who accompanies it in days of joy as well as in days of sorrow, until its last breath.

O Mary, on the day of thy triumph, on this day when heaven welcomes the cohort of angels who lead thee to thy Son, cast thy gaze upon our unfortunate country and its inhabitants, upon this country which thou hast so often visited with love.

Morning Star and cause of our joy, awaken the hearts of our fellow citizens. May they rediscover the beauty of mankind as conceived according to God's plan. May they experience the joy to be selflessly present near those who suffer, and serve them. May they reject every degrading glance and every degrading act towards their neighbour, redeemed by the blood of Christ.

Queen of France and Mother of good counsel, as important elections loom for our country, inspire vocations of political men and women who are true defenders of human dignity; this is the only path towards peace and justice for all, and the foundation for an authentic and sustainable development of humanity.

Mother of the Church and Virgin most chaste, make thy pacifying, comforting and healing presence felt in a special way to those men and women, families, and communities, who have suffered in their bodily and spiritual integrity from sexual and spiritual abuse committed by priests, religious, nuns, and lay people serving in the Church .

Virgin most holy, pray for us.

