Today’s feast is a celebration of grace: another example of God’s overwhelming generosity and love. None of us, not even Mary, deserves or merits God’s loving kindness. It is pure gift. In other words… it is grace. As the Church reflected on the mystery of the Incarnation, she became more and more aware of just what God’s becoming man and dwelling among us implies.

The Lord has chosen to forgive sin, to remove the sting of death, to assure us of everlasting life. And, as is God’s pattern, the Lord chooses to work with us, calling us to participate in the divine plan. One such human was a young maiden whom God called to be the mother of his son. Mary was given a unique role in God’s plan, a role for which she was specially blessed. Through God’s intervention, she was highly favored, …as we pray, she was “full of grace.”
Reflecting on that grace, the Church has been led by the Spirit to draw a most appropriate and logical conclusion: Mary’s blessedness implies full participation in her son’s resurrection. She is already in the kingdom of heaven—body and soul!

She serves as a sign of hope for all who seek to follow in the footsteps of her son. The Bible has no specific reference to Mary’s assumption, but the Gospel story of Mary’s visit to her cousin Elizabeth is filled with hints: “Blessed are you among women!” Mary has arrived, and that grace gives us hope.

In our world today, with bombing in North Korea; with human and religious persecution in Iraq; with racial tension and riots here in Ferguson, Missouri; with more moments of crisis than we can name… we need a model of hope and courage. As we come to this table, let us thank God for the gift of Mary’s example, and as she did, draw strength from her Son.