

Good morning everyone.

This Saturday, the Catholic church recognises the Assumption of Mary, body and soul into heaven. It is a holy day of obligation, which means we are invited to attend our own parish masses on this day. Over 2,000 years ago, Mary was asked to become the Mother of God, the mother of Jesus, and she said yes. She committed her whole life to God, even though she couldn't have known everything that her decision would bring. Mary is a model for our lives because she shows us what it means to trust God, to commit ourselves to Him, and to say yes even when we don't know exactly what lies ahead.

While it is one of our core pillars as people striving for human excellence, commitment and the act of committing to something can be hard. Commitment means giving your all to something and continuing even when things don't go according to plan. Saint Ignatius is an excellent model of this, committed to a life and mission of service in the face of huge and life changing setbacks and grief. As Mr Tannock asserted in his speech last week, commitment is being a man of integrity and someone whose word is his bond.

This theme of commitment is reflected in today's readings, particularly when St Paul tells us to "rejoice always, pray without ceasing, and give thanks in all circumstances." This doesn't mean that everything in our lives will always be easy or go the way we want. Instead, it reminds us to continue trusting God, even when things become difficult. In a similar way, Mary's commitment to God wasn't just about saying yes once. She continued to trust Him throughout her life, even when she faced challenges and uncertainty. For us, saying yes to God might not mean doing something as significant as becoming the mother of Jesus. It can be found in the smaller choices we make every day: helping someone who is struggling, forgiving someone who has hurt us, showing gratitude to the people who support us, or simply being willing to step outside our comfort zone when someone needs us. We see this reflection of Mary in our everyday lives, even when it's tough to see it.

We see the values Mary shared in her life in our mothers, Heads of Houses, mentors, and all the other female figures in our lives who commit to giving us guidance. They show us patience when we make mistakes, support us when things become difficult, and encourage us to become better people. This connects closely with today's Gospel, where Jesus says, "Be compassionate as your Father is compassionate." The compassion that these people show us is something we can try to reflect in our own lives. Just as Mary gave her commitment to God and cared for those around her, we can show our own commitment by being compassionate, forgiving others and supporting the people around us. So perhaps today is an opportunity to think about one person who has shown us that kind of compassion, and to be grateful for the commitment they have made to us. I would ask you to bring that person to mind now and take a few moments in silent gratitude for their faith in us.