

The first line of St. John's Gospel is:

*In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.*

The word "Word" used here is in the original Greek, "λογος" ... which means "word, idea, reasoning" or in the case of John's Gospel,

*the essential Word of God, Jesus Christ,
the personal wisdom and power ... [of] God,
... the person of Jesus the Messiah,
the second person in the Godhead*

And, the Greek word "λογος" is where we get the English word "logic."

Logic is used in various places - in computer science, in philosophical discourse, in debate and rhetoric, and ... hopefully ... in our daily decision making ... in our lives.

In argumentation and formal logic ... as used in debate ... when an error or mistake in reasoning is made, this is referred to as a "logical fallacy."

A very common fallacy is what is called the "either-or fallacy" ... sometimes called the "black-and-white thinking" ... or the "false dilemma" ... or "false choice."

An example of this "broken logic" would be the argument "if you're not with us, then you must be against us." Or in a family situation, where a second child is born ... and the older child may wrongly "reason" that she is no longer loved, since the newborn child appears to receive so much affection.

These sorts of false choices are used in propaganda ... often to over-simplify complicated situations. And for those of us who live in the real-world ... even for the most basic of actions ... things are hardly ... ever all that simple.

In today's Gospel we hear an exchange between our Lord and an unnamed woman in the crowd who exclaims:

*Blessed is the womb that carried you
and the breasts at which you nursed.*

To which Jesus replies:

*Rather, blessed are those
who hear the word of God and observe it.*

In recent centuries, there are some who have used this exchange to marginalize the role of the Blessed Mother ... whom Christians have honored from the earliest centuries ... beginning in pre-Apostolic times ... when we are told by the

Evangelist St. John, that while standing at the foot of the cross,
from that hour the disciple [... John ...] took her [... Mary ...] into his home.

And so, what is it. Is it either (1) blessed is the mother who carried Christ for nine months, and nursed him in His infancy? Or is it (2) those who hear the word of God and observe it?

Both.

The answer is ... Both.

Our Lady is known as the "*First disciple*," the first person to hear the Word of God - in the Person of Jesus Christ ... incarnate as a human being - from His first cries as a newborn child ... until His last words from the Cross before He died.

And as such, she is the model for us ... who strive to be disciples of Jesus Christ ... as far as how we should "*hear the word of God and observe it.*"

On November 1, 1950; Venerable Pius XII declared that Our Lady, "*having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory.*"

And while, theologically, this leaves open to interpretation whether Mary died, or whether she was assumed while living ... or fell asleep ... we can reflect on the Redemption of Christ which applies to all disciples, and which St. Paul proclaims:

*thanks be to God who gives us the victory
through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Mary was given this victory ... and we are offered the same victory "*through our Lord Jesus Christ.*" Not by any human merits of our own, but "*through ... Christ.*"

The Scriptural allusions to the "*Ark of the Covenant*" that we heard in the First Reading have been applied to Our Lady as the "*Ark of the New Covenant.*"

Not only in her physical bearing of Christ for 9 months from the Annunciation until His birth at Christmas; but also in what St. Luke tells us in the Christmas narrative, that:

Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart.

As we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ ... may we who at this liturgy have "*hear[d] the word of God*" and will from this altar receive Him under the appearances of Bread and Wine ... may we, through God's grace, keep Him in our hearts ... reflecting on what we have heard and what we have received ... so that as we go forth from this place ... we might better observe His words in our lives ... as disciples ... and as messengers ... and apostles ... of the Gospel.

Our Lady, Ark of the New Covenant, Queen Assumed into Heaven. Pray for us.