

**Homily by Fr. Jean-Xavier Salefran – Vice-Rector of the Sanctuary:  
9th Anniversary of the Renewal of the FNDL - August 22, 2025**

Today, we celebrate the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen!

How does this feast illuminate the renewal of the Notre-Dame de Lourdes Family, which took place on August 22, 2016?

This is a relatively recent feast, instituted at the conclusion of the Holy Year of 1950 by Pope Pius XII. Yet, the faithful have long bestowed upon Our Lady the title of Queen. Perhaps the best expression of this devotion is the Salve Regina, sung at the conclusion of Compline each day. The Litany of the Blessed Virgin also emphasizes this title. Thus, we invoke her as:

*Queen of Angels*  
*Queen of Patriarchs*  
*Queen of Prophets*  
*Queen of Apostles*  
*Queen of Martyrs*  
*Queen of Confessors*  
*Queen of Virgins*  
*Queen of all Saints*  
*Queen conceived without Original Sin*  
*Queen assumed into Heaven*  
*Queen of the Most Holy Rosary*  
*Queen of Families*  
*Queen of Peace*

Following the liturgical reform, the feast of Mary, Queen, was placed one week after the Solemnity of the Assumption. The Immaculate Virgin was assumed into Glory, where she reigns with her Son, the King of the Universe. She is not queen by her own power, but because she bore the King who governs Heaven and Earth.

In the Constitution on the Church from the Second Vatican Council, we read:

"Mary was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as Queen of the Universe, so that she might be more fully conformed to her Son."

**"Queen of the Universe" – how are we to understand this title?**

Msgr. Théas, Bishop of Lourdes from 1947 to 1970, in a homily on the Assumption, described the Virgin as "Glorious in Heaven, powerful on earth." The queenship of Our Lady is captured in these words: glorious in Heaven, powerful on Earth.

Through this title, the Church emphasizes that Mary exercises sovereignty over both the Church and the world. When we pray to her as Mother, we rely on her unfailing charity; when we invoke her as Queen, we proclaim the power of her intercession.

That is why we turn to her not only for ourselves, our intentions, and our families, but for the Church at large. In turning to her, our hearts expand to embrace the universal Church. It is beautiful to note that in the litanies, Mary's queenship is connected to all members of God's people: patriarchs, prophets, virgins, and families alike.

We pray to her for the Pope, bishops, priests, and religious men and women. We entrust to her the youth, catechumens, and the great challenges facing the Church. We continually ask for the conversion of sinners. We pray for Christians who suffer persecution. This love for the Church in its entirety underlies our commitment in the Notre-Dame de Lourdes Family.

But the Blessed Virgin is also Queen of the Universe: we pray to her for all those not yet in the boat of Peter. We implore her for peace. Through our prayer, we bear responsibility not only for the Church but for the world itself. This is why Pope Leo XIII encouraged special prayer and fasting today for the cause of peace.

I will conclude by addressing Our Lady with words written by Msgr. Théas:

***"Your queenship, O Mary, is inseparable from that of Jesus. It is united with and dependent upon His. You reign because He reigns. You reign where He reigns. He reigns first; you reign second.***

***Reign with Jesus, O Mary; reign over our minds and wills. Above all, be the Queen of our hearts.***

***You are not a Queen who isolates herself from her subjects, from her children on earth. You are continually among us, close to us. Especially in Lourdes, you are continually among us, close to us. And because your royal heart has as much power as it has goodness, our trust in you, O Our Lady, is boundless.***

***Virgin of the Assumption, to you we give our praise and admiration! You are the woman clothed with the sun; the moon is under your feet, and on your head you wear a crown of twelve stars.***

***Glory to you, O Our Lady! Where you are, may we one day be."***