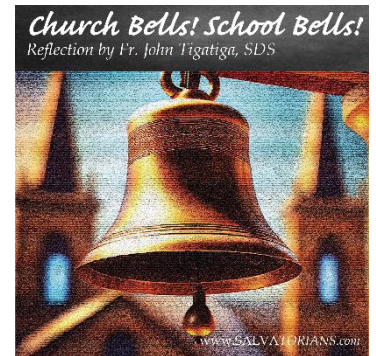


# School Bells! Church Bells!

Reflection by Fr. John Tigatiga, SDS

As summer draws to a close, students across the USA prepare for the familiar ritual of going back to school. This period marks a time of new beginnings, fresh opportunities, and the renewal of intellectual and social pursuits. Coinciding with this transitional phase is the Feast of the Assumption, celebrated on August 15th, which commemorates the Virgin Mary's assumption into heaven, the belief that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was taken body and soul into heavenly glory at the end of her earthly life. This event signifies not only Mary's unique role in the divine plan but also the potential for human elevation and transformation.



In this sense, both the Assumption and the educational journey emphasize the importance of striving towards a higher state of being. However, striving to these journeys, Hope and community ought to be the central themes.



**Hope in the Feast of the Assumption** - that there is a greater reality beyond our earthly existence, a promise of eternal life and unity with the divine. This encourages us to live virtuous lives, aspiring towards spiritual ideals.

**Hope in education** - that the aspiration to achieve one's dreams and potential be the driving force that motivates students to overcome obstacles, to persist in their studies, to understand the world, to question, to innovate, and to envision a future where their contributions can make a difference.

Just as Mary's journey was supported by her faith community, students' educational journeys are bolstered by the encouragement and guidance of those around them. Teachers, peers, and family members form a support network that nurtures the student's growth.

The confluence of the Assumption and the back-to-school season invites an integration of spiritual and intellectual growth. It suggests that education should not merely be a pursuit of academic knowledge but also a cultivation of virtues and values.

Peace,

**Fr. Tigatiga**

Fr. John Tigatiga, SDS



Ordained in Tanzania East Africa in 2015, Fr. Tigatiga took on the role of Mission Office Director in 2019. He represents the USA community, doing appeals for international missions. His vision is to be a mediator, a bridge that connects, and thereby brings human beings to God.

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