

Vox Populi

12 August 2026

On 11 October 1954, Pope Pius XII established the Feast of the Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary in his encyclical *Ad Caeli Reginam* (To the Queen of Heavens).

The title was not an invention of the 20th century, however. The Blessed Virgin had been honoured with the title of “Queen” since the earliest ages of the Church.

In the 4th century, St Ephrem the Syrian referred to her as Queen and later Church Fathers would echo this. By the 6th century, the title was common and through the Middle Ages, hymns began to address her by this title.

The encyclical acknowledged this history, in establishing the Feast of the Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

“From the earliest ages of the Catholic Church a Christian people, whether in time of triumph or more especially in time of crisis, has addressed prayers of petition and hymns of praise and veneration to the Queen of Heaven,” the encyclical read.

“And never has that hope wavered which they placed in the Mother of the Divine King, Jesus Christ; nor has that faith ever failed by which we are taught that Mary, the Virgin Mother of God, reigns with a mother's solicitude over the entire world, just as she is crowned in heavenly blessedness with the glory of a Queen.”

The feast is celebrated on 22 August, a week after the Solemnity of the Assumption, recognising that once assumed into heaven, she became Queen of Heaven.

In establishing the feast, Pope Pius XII said he hoped the feast would mean “that all may recognise more clearly and venerate more devoutly the merciful and maternal sway of the Mother of God.

“We are convinced that this feast will help to preserve, strengthen and prolong that peace among nations which daily is almost destroyed by recurring crises.”