

Immaculate Conception
of the Bless Virgin Mary
8 December



About the Immaculate Conception

The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception teaches that Mary was conceived without original sin, the human weakness that inclines us to sin. It was this grace that enabled Mary to give a sincere and thought-filled response with **“Yes” to God’s request, relayed to her by the Angel Gabriel, that she should consent to be the mother of the Incarnate God - Jesus Christ.**

Mary was prepared by God from the very first moment of her life to receive Jesus Christ. God’s grace preserved Mary from sin from the womb to the end of her life, because of her role in the mystery of salvation as the Mother of God.

This doctrine is part of the long-standing tradition of the Catholic Church, but was only formally defined as a doctrine by Pope Pius IX in 1854. This doctrine was the first infallible statement by a pope.

What can we learn from Mary’s Immaculate Conception?

Although Mary was conceived and born without sin, she could have chosen to respond against the Lord’s Way and what He asked of her. Yet she didn’t, so she lived a life free from sin.

Today’s solemnity praises God for the hope and possibility that Mary embodies, as we turn to her – our Blessed Mother - to learn from the first and most important relationship Jesus experienced with a human being.

In the Gospel reading for today’s liturgy, we see Mary’s freedom from the sin of Adam and Eve. Mary’s response of **“Yes” to the angel illustrates her willingness to put herself fully in God’s hands, even when it is not easy to do so or convenient and requires great faith and trust. We too, must realise that we do not have total control over our lives, and sometimes we need to let go, and say “Lord, you’re in charge – show me the way.”**

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Collect

O God, who by the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin prepared a worthy dwelling for your Son, grant, we pray, that, as you preserved her from every stain by virtue of the Death of your Son, which you foresaw, so, through her intercession, we, too, may be cleansed and admitted to your presence. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen..

Gospel

Luke 1:26-38

'I am the handmaid of the Lord'

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, **of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.**

He went in and said to her,

'Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you.'

She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her,

'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour.

Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus.

He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High.

The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David;

he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end.'

Mary said to the angel,

'But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?'

'The Holy Spirit will come upon you' the angel answered

'and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow.

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And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God.
Know this too: your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age,
herself conceived a son,
and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God.
'I am the handmaid of the Lord,'
said Mary 'let what you have said be done to me.'
And the angel left her.

Antiphon

Glorious things are spoken of you, O Mary, for from you arose the sun of justice,
Christ our God

Hymn for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception

1. Mary, your grace filled life began
when without sin you were conceived.
In life you followed the Lord's way,
and so his blessings you received.
*O Mary, untouched by sin's stain,
like you, sinless may we remain.*

2. O Mary, in your womb was made
a dwelling for God's only Son.
We ask your prayers for each of us,
that in our life God's will be done.
*O Mary, untouched by sin's stain,
like you, sinless may we remain.*

3. By faith, Mary you walked each day
and pondered God's ways in your heart.
To God you said 'yes' without thought
of the sorrow to pierce your heart.
*O Mary, untouched by sin's stain,
like you, sinless may we remain.*

4. O Mary, help us to choose right,
so that from sin we may be free.
You teach us how we are to care
for our neighbour and their needs see.
*O Mary, untouched by sin's stain,
like you, sinless may we remain.*

Melita 88. 88. 88

Text: Chris deSilva and Alessio Loiacono

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Other Music Suggestion

[Song of Mary](#) (Dan Schutte)

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Universalis App: 8 December 2020