

# MORNING MEDITATION

## Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

**God speaks to the simple. Simplicity is the spirit of Jesus.**

(St. Vincent de Paul)

### **Genesis 3:9-15, 20**

In the garden, man enjoyed an intimacy with God which was destroyed by disobedience. Ashamed and afraid man and woman hid themselves from God. This excerpt tells us that through disobedience sin entered the world, and as a result, man and woman experienced separation, suffering, and ultimately death. Man and woman failed to be faithful to what God made them to be. Sin is a violation of what God made us to be.

**Be faithful to what God made you to be.**

### **Psalm 98**

**Sing to the Lord a new song,  
For he has done wondrous deeds;  
His right hand has won victory for him, his holy arm**

### **Ephesians 1:3-6, 11-12**

Paul tells the Ephesians: God chose us before the world began to be holy and blameless in his sight, to be full of love...God has given us wisdom to understand fully the mystery, the plan he was pleased to decree in Christ.....to bring all things into one in Christ!

### **Luke 1:26-38**

This excerpt tells us about the visit of angel Gabriel to Mary with the great news of the birth of Jesus: "You have found favor with God and you shall conceive and bear a son and give him the name Jesus...." Gabriel assured her that it was through the power of the Holy Spirit that she has conceived this child and that "nothing is impossible with God". Mary surrendered and said to Gabriel, "I am the maidservant of the Lord. Let it be done to me as you say". Mary was called to surrender to God's word and that's our call today!

**Be still! Listen! Be discerning! Pray for God's wisdom to know and the courage to fulfill and surrender to his plan for you.**

Mary trusted and surrendered to God's word and God's word became flesh in her. God's word comes to us today through the Scriptures, through lived experiences of many people, through our own personal experiences and through many events and situations. We are called to be sensitive, docile, available, and attentive to God's word and let God's word become flesh in our life.

**May God's Word of "Love" continue to become flesh, real, tangible, in all of us!**

It was in simple faith that Mary accepted the angel's message. She accepted it without full knowledge and with troubled heart and fearful spirit. Luke tells us that Mary did not understand, but she pondered and wondered. Mary has become a model for all believers.

**Like Mary, we must wonder and ponder and doubt and believe and trust our way through life's many challenges, troubles, fears, anxieties, and uncertainties.**

**We may be tired and weary of our duties, responsibilities and daily chores.....full of life and energy or tired and weary, we must CHOOSE TO BE FAITHFUL.**

**Saint of the Day, December 8 - Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary and 5 other saints are remembered this day.**

In 1854, Pius IX solemnly proclaimed: "The most Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first instant of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege granted by almighty God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the savior of the human race, was preserved free from all stain of original sin."

It took a long time for this doctrine to develop. While many Fathers and Doctors of the Church considered Mary the greatest and holiest of the saints, they often had difficulty in seeing Mary as sinless, either at her conception or throughout her life. This is one of the Church teachings that arose more from the piety of the faithful than from the insights of brilliant theologians. Even such champions of Mary as Bernard of Clairvaux and Thomas Aquinas could not see theological justification for this teaching.

Two Franciscans, William of Ware and Blessed John Duns Scotus, helped develop the theology. They pointed out that Mary's Immaculate Conception enhances Jesus' redemptive work. Other members of the human race are cleansed from original sin after birth. In Mary, Jesus' work was so powerful as to prevent original sin at the outset.

Today, we gratefully remember the special grace Mary had received from the moment of her conception, which prepared her to be the mother of God. We believe that God had kept Mary free from sin from the moment of her conception. Let us be grateful to

Mary for living a simple and pure life to which God had called her and making herself totally available to God. Let us also draw inspiration and strength from her and follow her example of total dedication to the will of God.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs