

## The teaching of the Church



• *That the most Blessed Virgin Mary, at the first instance of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege granted by Almighty God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the human race, was preserved free from all stain of original sin, is a doctrine revealed by God and therefore to be believed firmly and constantly by all the faithful.*

This dogma was promulgated by Pope Pius IX in the Apostolic Constitution "Ineffabilis Deus" (1854).

• The Book of Proverbs (8:23–35) recalls this fact, applying to the Most Holy Virgin the words of eternal Wisdom; already the Holy Virgin was in the mind of God: "Iam concepta eram — I was already conceived" — yes, conceived in the mind of God, and thus in the divine plan God was already thinking of the Virgin Mary.

• She is the creature that was created, designed by God to destroy sin. Thus there is no creature more free of sin than the Blessed Virgin Mary. She has crushed the head of the serpent.

## The beauty of Our Lady

St. Bernadette gives witness to this when, describing the apparitions at Lourdes, she says of Our Lady:

*She is so beautiful,  
that one would be willing  
to die to see her again.*



**"Tota pulchra est, Maria,  
et macula originalis non est in te  
— Thou art all beautiful, O Mary, and  
there is no stain of original sin in Thee."**



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**I am the  
Immaculate  
Conception**

# St. Maximilian

## about Immaculate Conception

In 1858 the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to Bernadette Soubirous a total of eighteen times at Lourdes in France. On the 25<sup>th</sup> of March 1858 Our Lady spoke to St. Bernadette, "Que soy era immaculada councepciou"

*"I am the Immaculate Conception"*

**Saint Maximilian Kolbe meditated about these words and wrote:**



"She had said, not 'I am pure' but 'I am Purity itself', not 'I am white' but 'I am Whiteness itself'. Something that is white can cease to be white, but Whiteness is always white.

Thus Mary is more than conceived without sin, she is the Immaculate Conception itself, that is, the model, the archetype of stainless humanity.

Her soul, furthermore, was not only preserved from original sin, it was flooded with divine grace, whence the words of the angel: "Hail, full of grace. The Lord is with Thee".

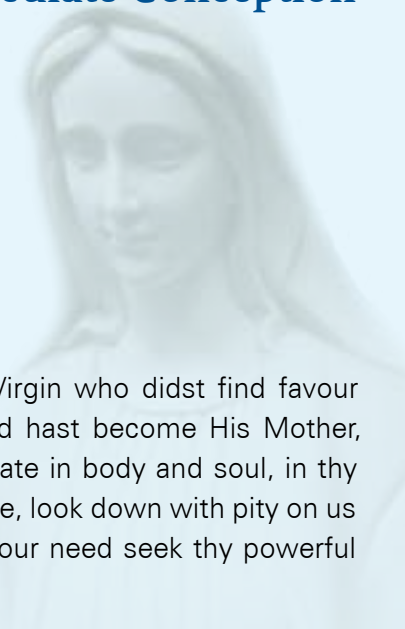
## Practical lesson for us

Each year, when the feast of the Immaculate Conception approached, Saint Maximilian Kolbe would be filled with an overwhelming spiritual joy which he would communicate to his brothers. He often explained to them, that this great dogma concerned not only herself, but had eminent practical consequences for us.



- Because the Blessed Virgin Mary was to become the Mother of Our Lord Jesus Christ, it was fitting that she be conceived without sin. Our Lady carried Our Lord, the Son of God, within her as the most sinless of creatures. During His hidden life, she lived in proximity to Him, not only in being physically close to Him, but also in having a human soul completely without sin, like Him.
- At our baptism, we were made Children of God and children of Our Blessed Lady. Since she is Our Mother, we should have a great desire to obey her and imitate her. We should avoid sin at all costs out of love for God and His Blessed Mother.
- When we receive Holy Communion, we receive the same Jesus Christ, the same Body which was conceived by the Blessed Virgin Mary and received from the Blessed Virgin Mary.
- We must live without sin. We must struggle against anything that might tarnish our souls.
- We must be a sign, a sign of truth, a sign of holiness, a sign of flight from sin; we must be a sign of the presence of the Virgin Mary in our souls.

## Prayer of St. Pius X to the Immaculate Conception



O most holy Virgin who didst find favour in God's sight and hast become His Mother, O Virgin, immaculate in body and soul, in thy faith and in thy love, look down with pity on us wretched who in our need seek thy powerful protection.

The evil serpent on whom was cast the primal curse continues, alas to attack and ensnare the poor children of Eve. But thou, our mother Blessed our Queen and our Advocate, thou who from the first instant of thy conception didst crush the head of this cruel enemy, receive our prayers: United to thee with one heart, we beseech thee to present them before the throne of God.

May we never be caught in the snares around us, but rather may we all reach the harbour of salvation. Despite the awesome perils which threaten, may God's Church and all Christian society sing out once again the hymn of deliverance, of victory and of peace.

Amen.