

Homily for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Today, the Church celebrates one of the most beautiful and hope-filled mysteries of our faith: the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is the truth that Mary, from the very first moment of her existence, was preserved—by a singular grace of God—from the stain of original sin. She was created **“full of grace,”** not by her own merits, but because God desired that the Mother of His Son be a pure and holy dwelling place.

The Immaculate Conception reminds us that grace comes first. Before Mary ever said **“yes”** to God, before she lived a single day of her life, God had already acted with love. This is how God works with us, too. Before we ask, He offers. Before we seek, He has already found us. Mary’s Immaculate Conception is a sign that salvation begins with God, not with us.

In Mary, God shows what His grace can accomplish when it is welcomed fully. She becomes the living masterpiece of God’s mercy.

Though Mary’s privilege is unique, it is not meant to distance her from us. Rather, her immaculate holiness is meant to inspire hope in us. She is the proof that God’s plan for humanity is not defeat, not weakness, not sin—but sanctity.

In Mary, we see the first fruits of what God wants to do in us: to heal what is wounded, to purify what is sinful, and to restore what is broken.

Mary reveals our destination—that we, too, are meant to be holy.

The Gospel of the Annunciation shows Mary as free, thoughtful, and courageous. Grace didn't replace her freedom; it transformed it. When Mary says, "**Be it done unto me according to your word,**" heaven and earth are changed.

God asks for her cooperation—and she freely gives it. Salvation enters the world through her humble obedience.

Today, God continues to speak His Word into our lives. He invites each of us to echo Mary's "**yes**" in our own circumstances: in our work, our families, our struggles, our vocations, and our uncertainties.

Every "**yes**" to God—even a small, trembling one—allows His light to enter the world again.

Mary was conceived without sin, not to stand at a distance, but so that she could be near us without the shadow of sin, loving us with a mother's pure heart. She intercedes for us, guides us, protects us, and leads us to her Son.

In a world marked by division, anxiety, and temptation, we look to Mary and pray: "**O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee.**"

Today's solemnity is not only about Mary—it is about God's mercy and our destiny. It is a feast that tells us: Sin does not have the final word. Grace is stronger than darkness. God's plan for each of us is holiness and joy.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

May Mary, the Immaculate One, help us to open our hearts as she did, so that Christ may be conceived anew in our lives and shine through us to the world. **Amen.**