

Sermon for the 2nd Sunday in Advent, December 7th, 2025, on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception – *Tota pulchra es, Maria*

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

My dearly beloved in Our Lord,

The Immaculate Conception which we celebrate tomorrow, is one of the greatest feasts of Our Lady, and the first in the order of time. It has always been believed in the Church. But only quite lately, in the year 1854, Pope Pius IX has proclaimed it as a dogma to be believed with divine faith, contained in divine revelation.

Our Lady is all-beautiful, as we pray in the Alleluja verse: “Thou art all fair, O Mary, and there is in thee no stain of original sin.” By a special privilege of grace, as the dogma says, Our Lady’s soul has been *preserved* from the stain of original sin. She has not been *purified* from original sin, rather she has never been stained with it. Although she has a human father, St Joachim, and in all other cases original sin is passed on through human generation, because we all descend ultimately from the first father, Adam, she is and always has been immune from original sin.

This is why, in the Hungarian *Ave Maria*, the change from “malaszttal teljes” to “kegyelemmel teljes” is neither innocent nor correct. “Malaszt” is the grace of God in the sense of pleasing God; while “kegyelem”, also meaning grace, has the connotations of mercy or amnesty. Our Lady has always been pleasing to God, without any trace or shadow of sin. She has never committed any sin, venial or mortal, in all her life. This is not automatic: Eve had also been created in grace, without sin, immaculately – but she has not remained faithful to that grace and privilege. Our Lady has.

The proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception has been preceded by the Our Lady’s apparition to the Novice Catherine Labouré in 1830, in Paris. She demanded that a medal be minted, revealing its patterns. This is what we know as the medal of the Immaculate Conception, better known under the name “miraculous medal” because Our Blessed Lady has wrought innumerable miracles through this Sacramental. The Church has approved a feast for this for some places, on November 27. On the following day the feast of the seer, whose body lies incorrupt in the rue du Bac in Paris, is also celebrated. Catherine Labouré (1806-1876) has been beatified by Pope Pius XI in 1933 and canonized by Pope Pius XII in 1947.

Similarly the dogma has been endorsed by Our Lady, so to say, in her apparitions to St Bernadette Soubirous in Lourdes a good three years after its proclamation, at the beginning of 1858. The parish priest, Fr Peyramale, exercised great prudence when rumors of an apparition reached him. There were over 100 (!) fake apparitions around Lourdes at the time of Our Lady’s visit... He asked Bernadette about “the lady’s” name. Bernadette asked her, and “the lady in white” said: “I am the Immaculate Conception”. This Bernadette repeated to herself while she went back to the village, after the apparition. When she reached the priest, she bluntly said to him, lest she forget: “I am the Immaculate Conception.” Fr Peyramale was stunned, of course. Then he realized that this was the lady’s answer to his request. Still, he sat down Bernadette and explained to her the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. He said that Catholics believe that Our Lady was conceived without sin, immaculately; but that it would be *wrong* to say that *she IS the Immaculate Conception*. In this he has been proven wrong later by theologians as they looked into the nature of the apparitions. They determined that it is entirely right not only to say that Our Lady is conceived immaculately; but that she *IS* the Immaculate Conception. This first grace and privilege characterizes her. It expresses what, and even, who she is. Certainly the Immaculate Conception is ordered towards the divine Motherhood of the Blessed Virgin Mary. But it is near impossible to imagine that God would have taken a human nature from a creature tainted with sin. And divine Revelation tells us how things have happened.

Our Lady Immaculate has thus been always in God’s mind. Just as all things have been made *through* the Divine Word, the Second divine Person who wanted to become Incarnate, the entire visible Creation has been ordered towards the Incarnation. This divine plan includes the divine Motherhood, prepared through the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary who was to become

the Mother of God.

The proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception also rang in a golden era of Mariology, the theological teaching and reflection about Our Lady, her rôle in the work of the Redemption, her privileges etc. This period lasted for about one century until the proclamation of the next dogma concerning Our Lady, that of her Assumption into Heaven with her body and soul, by Pope Pius XII, on the 1st of November, 1950.

This Marian century is like the very clear and luminous backdrop on which the filth and horror of neo-modernism and its takeover of the Church stands out all the more in a grueling and hideous manner. It is almost as on Good Friday, when the forces of Hell deployed their utmost strength and ruse in order to overthrow God's plan. Satan had found a disciple who had been close to Our Lord's mind and heart, one of the Apostles, who was ready to betray him and sell him to his sworn enemies – just as the modernists succeeded to heave to the See of Peter one of their mind who would undertake the toppling of the Church through a general Council. It is a sad and most telling fact that Our Lady is just about absent from the otherwise lengthy texts of the "Second Vatican Council". Still, just as God's plan has not been crossed but fulfilled by the Passion, Crucifixion and Death of His Son Incarnate, in the same manner the Church founded by him in His Precious Blood seems like overcome and exterminated, but lives on according to Christ's promise.

This is very important for every true Catholic. Not only does our adhering to the integral, undiminished truth allow us to keep our head above the waterline without drowning in today's circumstances; but also our faith and firm conviction of victory is strengthened from day to day by holding on to the banner of Our Lady. Throughout the centuries the Church has had the growing conviction that she is the winner in all of God's battles, the one who alone has overcome all heresies in the entire world (Roman Breviary).

We need to hold on firmly to the true Faith.

And even more importantly, we need to live in accordance with the Faith, and from the Faith: "The just man liveth by faith" (Hebr 10:38; Gal 3:11; Rom 1:17). Modern Catholics mostly live as if the life of Faith were just something additional, an optional layer of varnish making their life "nicer". This is entirely wrong: Just as the natural life cannot be led worthily if it be not inspired and dominated by the natural light we have received, namely reason, so the Christian life cannot be called worthy if it is not inspired and dominated by Faith which enlightens reason.

This is what we see when we contemplate Our Lady, as today in the mystery of her Immaculate Conception. None of her thoughts, words or actions have ever been inspired by the flesh, by passion, by dark desires. She has always been immaculate in her innermost intention and in her actions, totally centered on God and ordered towards God.

We need to aspire to imitate her as best as we can, in our poor condition of sinners. But we are not poor sinners left to our own devices; we have been redeemed by Christ's superabundant merits, and by the merits of Our Lady who has obtained for us the same graces as Christ, though in a different manner fitting to who she is. She is truly our Co-redemptrix. And she is the Mediatrix of all graces, the Mediatrix with the Mediator, as the Saints say.

A very practical means to attach ourselves to Our Lady Immaculate is to wear the Medal of the Immaculate. You need to have it blessed and imposed by a priest in order to collect all its spiritual benefits. In 1832 she demanded that this medal be struck. She promised to work miracles through it, and she has kept her word. This is why it is commonly called the Miraculous Medal. It carries this prayer as an inscription: "O Maria sine labe concepta... O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee."

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.