

Mary was conceived immaculately in her mother's womb just as God promised at the beginning of the Book of Genesis. Her birthday that we celebrate nine months after her Immaculate Conception is the true sign that God who is perfect in all he does, created Mary to be a part of his perfection.

On the day on which the whole Church celebrates the feast day of the Immaculate Conception, St. Arnold Janssen gave the beginning of our Congregation in 1889. He wanted us to understand that perfection in our missionary work can only be attained with God's graces.

*How is my striving for perfection as I begin my journey through the Season of Advent?*

## Immaculate Conception



"The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; Therefore the child to be born will be called holy; he will be called Son of God'" (Lk 1:35)

Mary overcomes her fear and says "yes" to God becoming the first true disciple of God's will. Mary responded fully to God's desire to be born in her gradually discovering its deep meaning.

*What fear makes me hesitant to do what God asks of me?*

*How is God inviting me to let God be born in me?*

Mary's "YES"

"My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; For the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly;

He has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.

He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

(Lk 1:46-55)

Mary gave a testimony of her faith when she met her cousin Elizabeth. This prayer of praise is addressed to the God of Abraham who brings salvation to the poor.

*What makes me glad and joyful today?*

*What song of praise would I sing?*

## Magnificat

# CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH

Zechariah rejoiced blessing God for all the good things he has done for him especially for sending the Savior who will lead people toward peace, love and reconciliation.

*How might I open myself more fully to God's indwelling?*

*What could help me to be more aware of God's goodness?*



“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them. He has raised up a mighty savior for us in the house of his servant David, as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us. Thus, he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors, and has remembered his holy covenant, the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham, to grant us that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all our days. And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins. By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in the darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”  
(Lk 1:68-79)

## PROLOGUE OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

“And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.”

(Jn 1: 14-16)

On Christmas day we celebrate God who came to live among us in the person of Jesus. He existed from all time in the form of the Father's word but on that day he revealed himself to those who were awaiting his coming.

*What joy have I experienced as I prepared for Christmas?*

*What thanks can I give for this gift today?*

*How am I rejoicing in anticipation of Christ's coming at Christmas?*



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