

DECEMBER 8, 2021
Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception
Luke 1: 26-38

“SAY YES TO GOD ALWAYS.”

The dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary defined Mary was totally free from any sins from the first moment of her conception and existence. According to Pope Pius IX who defined this solemnity as the dogma of faith in 1854, only a totally sinless setting, in this case the womb of a woman, was suitable for the Son of God to be born.

“The First Reading reminds us that it was a woman who was instrumental in bringing pain and suffering, the result of sin, to the whole world. It will also be a woman who will be instrumental in bringing to the world its salvation and healing. The Second Reading tells us that all of us have been called by God to share his love and blessings long before we even existed. This is even more true of Mary, who was singled out from eternity by God to be the Mother of his Son. The Gospel speaks, not of Mary’s conception, but that of Jesus. It begins the moment Mary says that ‘Yes’. The angel greets her as ‘full of grace’, filled with God’s love and God’s favour, specially singled out for this moment. This has always been interpreted as indicating Mary’s total freedom from any taint of sin. As ‘Ark of the Covenant’ it was felt that the Incarnate Word should begin his human existence in an environment untouched by sin.”¹

My sisters and brothers, let us imitate the Blessed Virgin Mary who promptly say ‘Yes’ to God’s invitation even if it seemed impossible, trust our Lord that what He promised are true and will be fulfilled, and do the will of God even if it seemed complicated, tough and costly.

¹ livingspace.sacredspace.ie

According to Pope Francis: "This, yes, is the Christian sense of seizing the day. To not enjoy life in each passing moment – no, this is the worldly sense. But to seize today, to say "no" to evil and "yes" to God, to open oneself to His grace, to once and for all stop thinking of ourselves, dragging ourselves into hypocrisy and to face our own reality as we are – this is who we are – to recognize that we have not loved God and neighbour as we should have. And to confess it, this is the beginning of a journey of conversion, asking God's pardon first of all in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and then to repair the harm done to others. But always open to grace: the Lord knocks on our door, He knocks on our heart to enter into friendship with us, in communion, to give us salvation. And this, for us, is the path for becoming 'holy and immaculate.' The uncontaminated beauty of our Mother is incomparable, but at the same time it attracts us. Let us entrust ourselves to her and say "no" to sin and "yes" to Grace once and for all."

May our Blessed Virgin Mary intercede for us and be our inspiration to always say 'Yes' to God everyday of our lives. So, we say, Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, pray for us.