

Proper Prayers of the Mass  
Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary  
Provided Courtesy of Una Voce Orange County

COMMENTARY ON THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION  
OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

“Tota pulchra es! O Mary, thou art all fair, unstained by original sin” (*1st Ant. at Vespers; All.*). This cry of admiration, which the Church puts on our lips, expresses the feelings of mankind subject to the evil consequence of sin, before the spotless purity of our Lady. From all eternity God had chosen Mary to be the Mother of the Word Incarnate (*Ep.*); He therefore decked her in holiness (*Int.*), preserving her from all stain and making her a worthy dwelling for His Son (*Collect*). The Blessed Virgin’s perfect redemption which, from the moment of her conception, preserved her from original sin cannot, therefore, be dissociated from our redemption by Christ; and so, the feast of the Immaculate Conception, coming in the course of Advent, heralds the splendours of the Incarnation of the Redeemer.

As we have it to-day, the feast was instituted by Pius IX when he defined the dogma on December 8, 1854. However, a feast of the “Conception” was celebrated long before; it is found in the East in the eighth century, in Ireland in the ninth and in England in the eleventh century. These feasts are evidence of the traditional veneration of Mary’s spotless holiness; Pius IX’s definition only reaffirmed and defined the meaning of the Church’s traditional belief.

Commentary From St. Andrew Daily Missal, 1952 ed.

