

# Immaculate Conception

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In the [Constitution](#) *Ineffabilis Deus* of 8 December, 1854, [Pius IX](#) pronounced and [defined](#) that the [Blessed Virgin Mary](#) "in the first instance of her conception, by a singular privilege and [grace](#) granted by [God](#), in view of the [merits](#) of [Jesus Christ](#), the Saviour of the [human race](#), was preserved exempt from all stain of [original sin](#)."

No direct or categorical and stringent [proof](#) of the [dogma](#) can be brought forward from [Scripture](#). But the first [scriptural](#) passage which contains the [promise](#) of the [redemption](#), mentions also the [Mother of the Redeemer](#). The [sentence](#) against the first [parents](#) was accompanied by the Earliest Gospel (*Proto-evangelium*), which put enmity between the [serpent](#) and the [woman](#): "and I will put enmity between thee and the [woman](#) and her seed; she (he) shall crush thy head and thou shalt lie in wait for her (his) heel" ([Genesis 3:15](#)). The translation "she" of the

### Vulgate

is interpretative; it originated after the fourth century, and cannot be defended critically. The conqueror from the seed of the

### woman

, who should crush the serpent's head, is

### Christ

; the

### woman

at enmity with the

### serpent

is

### Mary

### God

puts enmity between her and

### Satan

in the same manner and measure, as there is enmity between

### Christ

and the seed of the serpent.

### Mary

was ever to be in that exalted state of

### soul

which the serpent had destroyed in

### man

, i.e. in

### sanctifying grace

. Only the continual union of

### Mary

with

### grace

explains sufficiently the enmity between her and

### Satan

. The Proto-evangelium, therefore, in the original text contains a direct promise of the

### Redeemer

, and in conjunction therewith the manifestation of the masterpiece of His

### Redemption

, the perfect preservation of His

### virginal Mother

from

### original sin

**The salutation of the angel Gabriel — *chaire kecharitomene*, Hail, full of g  
race**

(

### Luke 1:28

) indicates a unique abundance of grace

, a

supernatural

, godlike state of

soul

, which finds its explanation only in the Immaculate Conception of

Mary

. But the term

*kecharitomene*

(full of

grace

) serves only as an illustration, not as a

proof

of the

dogma

.

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