

Immaculate Conception

Written by W.J.Pais

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

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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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