



# What Makes Us Catholic?

## The Immaculate Conception and Assumption of Mary

The Immaculate Conception refers to the birth of Jesus, right? No, it refers to Mary's preservation from original sin from the very moment of her conception. Even though Catholics have believed this since the earliest days of the Church, the dogma that the Church uses today was given by Pope Pius IX in 1854:

The most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Savior of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin.

This belief is rooted in scripture. "And [the angel Gabriel] came to [Mary] and said, "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God." (Luke 1:28-30)

The fact that the angel replaces Mary's name in the greeting with "full of grace" is significant. Mary was given the name "full of grace" indicating that she was, and always had been, full of grace. In other words, she had never been stained by sin.

The Immaculate Virgin was preserved free from all stain of original sin so when the course of her earthly life was over she was taken up, body and soul, into heavenly glory and exalted by the Lord as Queen over all things so that she might be the more fully conformed to her Son. The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin is a singular participation in her Son's Resurrection and an anticipation of the resurrection of other Christians.

---

***Want to read more about this topic?***

**Sources:**

- Catechism of the Catholic Church: CCC 491-492, 966
- The Bible and the Virgin Mary, St. Paul Center for Biblical Theology
- Book: *20 Answers: Mary*, By: Tim Staples

Do you have questions on this topic, or other topics you would like to learn more about? Please complete the back side of this sheet and leave it in the box on the "What Makes Us Catholic?" stand.

Please note your question on this topic, or other topics you would like to learn more about below and leave it in the box on the "What Makes Us Catholic?" stand.

---

---

---

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # and/or Email \_\_\_\_\_