

HOMILY IMACULATE CONCEPTION YRC 2018

Today is the feast of the Immaculate Conception. The Immaculate Conception means that Mary was conceived without original sin. In the first reading we see how original sin entered the world. Original sin entered the world when Adam and Eve disobeyed God. We immediately saw the effect of original sin and how our sin affects others. Adam covered his nakedness after sinning. Once sin entered into the world, people have to protect themselves from one another. We have to protect ourselves from the sin of other people. But in the beginning this was not so. Before sin entered the world, we could fully trust and love one another.

Mary was conceived by God's grace without original sin. God did this to prepare her to become the mother of Jesus, to live out her vocation, her purpose in life. As we heard in the Gospel reading, she said yes. Through the sacraments of initiation we received the Holy Spirit and we were freed from original sin. The Holy Spirit gave each one of us gifts or charisms to help us to live out our vocation or purpose in life. Many people tell me that they are not sure what God's plan is in their lives. Identifying your charisms is an important step in discerning your vocation or purpose in life. Charisms are always meant to be used to serve other people. Charisms have three signs. First of all they are effective. If you have the charism of teaching, people will learn. If you have the charism of leadership, people will follow you. Secondly, when you are using your charisms you will feel energized, satisfied and joyful. You will like doing what you are doing. Third, you will be affirmed by other people. This may come in lots of positive feedback. This you may also get affirmation by people seeking you out because they recognize your charism. For example if people are frequently asking for your advice, wisdom is probably your charism.

God had a plan for Mary. He wanted her to be the mother of Jesus so he gave her the gift of the Immaculate Conception. God also has a plan for you. If you are having a hard time figuring that out what that is, look for your charisms. Find what you are good at, what you enjoy doing and what other people give you positive feedback on, then use them to help others.