

Doctrinal Homily Outline

December 8: *The Immaculate Conception*

For an example of how these doctrinal homily outlines will look, here is an advance copy of the outline for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, coming up in just a few weeks. It is a straightforward task to preach a doctrinally strong homily on this Holy Day of Obligation since it commemorates a dogma.

Certainly, you the homilist can formulate a different central idea, state the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception in a different way, and provide different practical applications. And again, this is not a homily but some of the ideas around which your own sermon could be constructed.

December 8, 2012— Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary: Lectionary: 689

Central Idea: Mary is the New Eve, the mother of all who live in Christ.

Doctrine: The Immaculate Conception

Practical Application: Ways to grow closer to Our Lady

Central Idea—Mary is the New Eve, the mother of all who live in Christ

- **First Reading:** When the early Church fathers read this passage from Genesis in the light of Christ's Redemption, they called it the *Protoevangelium*, or the first announcement of the Gospel. Despite their Original Sin of disobedience, Adam and Eve and all their descendants were promised a victory over the demonic serpent. The woman will have an offspring who will strike the head of the devil.
- **Responsorial Psalm:** The "new song" is the fulfillment of God's plan of salvation announced in today's Gospel. The Blessed Virgin Mary is the *woman* whose *offspring*—Jesus Christ—will make right what Adam made wrong.
- **Second Reading:** In the Letter to the Ephesians, St. Paul teaches that Christ's salvation is not just forgiveness of sins—which would be enough—but also our adoption as holy sons and daughters of God.
- **Gospel:** The Redemption could take place because the Blessed Virgin Mary freely consented to God's plan for her to be the Mother of the Redeemer. This makes Mary the New Eve, the mother of all who live in Christ.

Doctrine—The Immaculate Conception

- Mary could freely consent to be the Mother of the Redeemer due to the unique privilege of her Immaculate Conception.
- The dogma of the Immaculate Conception is "[T]he 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” (Dogma of 1854)

- God gave this singular gift to Our Lady so she would be able to say yes to being the Mother of Christ. God could become man to redeem us because Mary said yes to the Angel.
- Mary was redeemed by Christ in advance of his Passion and Death. From her origin she possessed *holiness*—that is, friendship with God through sanctifying grace—and *justice*—that is, a right relationship within herself, with others, and with all of creation. This is why Mary could say yes to God, the basis for her sinlessness, and the reason why her body was eventually assumed into heaven.

Practical Application—Grow closer to Our Lady

- Just as Eve is the mother of the living—that is, of every human being—Mary is the mother of all who live in Christ the Redeemer of man.
- **Imitate Mary**—“Blessed are those who hear the Word of God and keep it” (Lk 11:28). When a woman praised Jesus’ mother for having the good fortune of being chosen to be the mother of such a great man, Jesus pointed to Mary’s true greatness, that she heard the word of God from the angel Gabriel and said yes to it. We, too, should listen to the Word of God, both in Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition, and adhere to it.
- **Take Mary’s advice**—“Do whatever he tells you” (Jn 2:5). At Cana, when they had no wine, Mary knew her son could fix the problem, so she told the attendants to do whatever he told them to do. In the same way, we do best when we discern God’s will and then try to carry it out.
- **Rely on Mary’s help**—“Behold your mother” (Jn 19:27). On the Cross, Jesus gave us to Mary and Mary to us in the person of St. John the Apostle. This is why we pray thousands and thousands of times, “pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death.”