

**“Mary is the attentive Virgin, who receives the word of God with faith,  
that faith which in her case was the gateway and path to divine motherhood.”**  
(*Marialis Cultus*, 17)

*My dear Confreres, Brothers, Sisters and Lay Associates,*

Greetings of hope, love, joy and peace of God and Happy feast of the Immaculate Conception!

We have just entered the new liturgical year, marked by the Advent Season. It is a new beginning of our spiritual journey – our pilgrimage of faith centered in Christ Jesus, the Wisdom Incarnate. In the beginning of this Advent Season, the Church invites us to ponder on Mary, “the supreme masterpiece of Almighty God” (TD 5), “the earthly paradise of Jesus Christ the new Adam” (TD 6) by celebrating the solemnity of her Immaculate Conception. Since the 7<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> centuries in the East, exactly nine months before the feast of the Nativity of Mary (8 September), a feast of the Conception of Mary was celebrated and later since the 11<sup>th</sup> century, in the West, this solemnity is part of the Advent-Christmas period, linking the messianic expectation and the glorious return of Christ with the admiring memory of Mary, our Mother and Model. Why do we need to return to Mary by reflecting her Immaculate Conception in the beginning of the Advent Season? Blessed Pope Paul VI explained that this celebration gives us “the basic preparation (cf. Is. 11:1, 10) for the coming of the Savior and of the happy beginning of the Church without spot or wrinkle” (*Marialis Cultus* 3). In this celebration, we are invited to take her as a model in preparing ourselves to welcome the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Son of Mary (see *Marialis Cultus* 4).

Pondering the Conception of Mary in the light of the mystery of the Incarnation, St. Montfort says:

Eternal Wisdom built herself a house worthy to be her dwelling-place (Prov. 9:1). She created the most Holy Virgin, forming her in the womb of St Anne with even greater delight than he had derived from creating the universe. It is impossible on the one hand to put into words the gifts with which the Blessed Trinity endowed this most fair creature, or on the other hand to describe the faithful care with which she corresponded to the graces of her Creator (LEW 105).

In his True Devotion of Our Lady, St. Montfort also says:

She is the vast and divine world of God ... the magnificence of the Almighty where he hid his only Son, as in his own bosom, and with him everything that is most excellent and precious. What great and hidden things the all-powerful God has done for this wonderful creature, as she herself had to confess in spite of her great humility, “the Almighty has done great things for me” (TD 6).

In his message of the Angelus on December 8, 2020, Pope Francis said that the Immaculate Conception is "one of the wonders of the story of salvation". What marvelous and striking is that Mother Mary was faithful to live her life in accordance to the graces that God had given to her. St. Montfort said:

During the first fourteen years of her life the most holy Virgin Mary grew so marvelously in the grace and wisdom of God and responded so faithfully to his love that the angels and even God himself were filled with rapturous admiration for her. Her humility, deep as an abyss, delighted him. Her purity so other worldly drew him down to her. He found her lively faith and her ceaseless entreaties of love so irresistible that he was lovingly conquered by her appeals of love. "So great was the love of Mary," explains St. Augustine, "that it conquered the omnipotent God" (LEW 107).

Mary, our Mother, is holy, pure in heart, without stain of sin. She is indeed full of Grace because she has never been guided by the spirit of the world, or even by her own spirit. She is always docile to the Spirit of God. Jesus in his beatitudes said: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to them ... Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God" (Mt. 5: 3, 8). The holiness, pure in heart, poor in spirit is the fundamental condition that allows the Incarnate Wisdom, Jesus Christ, to build his dwelling place in us. Through the grace of our baptism, God has made us holy like him. Let us celebrate the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of our Mother as a moment of grace for each one of us to renew our consecration to Jesus through Mary by renewing our baptismal promises. Pope Francis said: "The uncontaminated beauty of our Mother is incomparable, but at the same time it attracts us. Let us entrust ourselves to her and say 'no' to sin and 'yes' to Grace once and for all" (*Angelus Address*, on December 8, 2020).

May our Mother, Mary, guide and form us to be more and more like her Son, Jesus. And, let us live and do everything through Mary, with Mary, in Mary, and for Mary, in order to do it more perfectly through Jesus, with Jesus, in Jesus, and for Jesus (See TD 257 – 265).

**Happy Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception!**



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Yoseph Putra Dwi Darma WATUN".

Fr. Yoseph Putra Dwi Darma WATUN, SMM  
Superior General