

Mary's Immaculate Conception 150 Years After the Definition and Lourdes



By Brother John
Samaha, S.M.

anticipation of what God did for all through Christ, she alone was preserved from original sin "from the first moment of her conception."

In the Pastorak Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (n. 25), the Second Vatican Council pointed out the social and structural elements of sin, which helped us to understand original sin as a human condition that everyone encounters in the world from the moment of birth. Thus, Mary's "singular grace and privilege" is easier to understand. By her Immaculate Conception she was conceived in the fullness of grace, in the state of the closest possible union with God in view of her future role as the Mother of God.

This feast was celebrated already in the seventh century in Palestine as the Conception by St. Anne of the Theotokos (Mother of God) on December 9. But the doctrine is understood differently by some Earlier Christian Churches because of a variance in their theological understanding of original sin. The observance spread West from

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The feast of Mary's Immaculate Conception is celebrated on December 8, and honors the conception of Mary in the womb of her mother, St. Anne, without original sin. Sadly, this is frequently misunderstood.

In 2008 we celebrated the 150th anniversary of the Blessed Virgin's appearance at Lourdes, where she identified herself to St. Bernadette as the Immaculate Conception. In 2004 we marked the 150th anniversary of Blessed Pope Pius IX's solemn definition of this doctrine on December 8, 1854. Blessed Pius IX explained that Mary was preserved from original sin by a "singular grace and privilege" given her by God "in view of the merits of Jesus Christ," Redeemer of the human race. Mary, like every other human being, needed the redemptive benefits of Christ; but, in

Palm Beach Dinner Raises Awareness for Work of St. Jude



More than 100 guests gathered March 4 to learn more about the lifesaving work of St. Jude at the second annual St. Jude Palm Beach Dinner.

Doctors and executives from St. Jude and ALSAC attended the dinner to share new developments in St. Jude's battle against pediatric cancer. Dr. William E. Evans, director and CEO of St. Jude, and Richard C. Shadyac Jr., CEO of ALSAC, briefed guests about the hospital's research developments. St. Jude has designed protocols that have helped push overall

survival rates for childhood cancers from less than 20 percent when the hospital opened in 1962 to 80 percent today.

The dinner, which was held at Club Colette in Palm Beach, Fla., was co-chaired by Lourdes Fanjul, Talbott Maxey and Thomas C. Quick.

"On behalf of my co-chairs, Lourdes Fanjul and Talbott Maxey, we are thrilled to bring St. Jude Children's Research Hospital to Palm Beach," said Quick, who also serves on the investment committee of the National Committee of the ALSAC/St. Jude

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