



# HOLY DAY THIS WEEK!

LITURGY BYTES *by Michele Hall*



Every year the feast of the Immaculate Conception, a most important Marian feast, is celebrated by the Church as a holy day of obligation. The feast occurs on December 8th. However, this year the feast is being moved to December 9th since it occurs on a Sunday. The solemnity of the Immaculate Conception cannot replace an Advent Sunday. If December 8th falls on a Sunday, the solemnity is transferred to the following Monday as is the case this year.

In 1854, Pope Pius IX issued a decree declaring that the Blessed Virgin Mary was free from all stain of original sin. This belief is central to the Catholic doctrine of the Immaculate Conception which holds that Mary was chosen by God to be the mother of Jesus Christ and that she was preserved from the sin of Adam and Eve in order to be a pure vessel for the Son of God.

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception is a time to celebrate the great joy of God's gift to humanity in Mary and to recognize, with greater clarity, the truth that each and every human being has been created by God to fulfill a particular mission that he and only he can fulfill. The Feast of the Immaculate Conception is also a time for Catholics to reflect on the importance of Mary in the life of the Church. Mary is often referred to as the Mother of God and is seen as a powerful intercessor for all who pray to her. Her role in the Incarnation and the birth of Jesus is central to the Catholic faith, and her example of faith and devotion is an inspiration to millions of Catholics around the world. May your week be filled with the glorious light of our Blessed Mother!

*Have a blessed, joy-filled, and peaceful week ahead!*