

## Reflection Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> Week Advent the Immaculate Conception 2021

The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception states that the Virgin Mary was conceived without *original sin*, that twist in our nature that pushes us to follow what it knows is not right. This grace enabled Mary to give a true and considered “Yes” to the Angel Gabriel and consent to be the mother of the incarnate God. This is one of the Marian doctrines that Islam shares with the Catholic Church. ‘In a famous *Hadith* attributed to the Prophet, it affirms that: “Every child is touched by the devil as soon as he is born and this contact makes him cry. Excepted are Mary and her Son.” From this *Hadith* vs 35-37 of Sura III, Moslem commentators have deduced and affirmed the principle of Mary’s original purity.’ The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception was almost universally believed over the centuries but was only formally defined as a doctrine of the Church by Pope Pius IX in 1854.

All of humanity, including Mary and her Son Jesus, are born with the ability to choose. Genesis tells the story of Adam and Eve, the first of humanity who chose evil over goodness. The Annunciation tells the story of Mary who chose good over evil and birthed Jesus, our saviour, into the world. We know only too well that Jesus also chose good over evil and freed us from the power of choosing evil over good. Unfortunately, we do not always use that freedom and choose the opposite. When we are baptised, we are freed from the power of original sin, from the power of evil. Today, on her feast day and the feast of our parish, Mary offers us to help us choose always what is right and good. As a parish we are pretty good at that, Mary thanks you for that.