



A Message from the President

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Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

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On this observance of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, I would like to share with you a portion of what one of our members, The Rev'd Canon Jonathan J. D. Ostman, SSC, OL sent in his weekly newsletter to his parishioners (Anglican Church of S. John the Baptist, Marshall, VA). I think it helps clarify the nature of the feast as well as the important role of Our Lady in God's plan for our redemption:

"[Today] is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, commemorating the historic dogma that she was born without the effects of original sin. We recall from the Gospel of S. Luke, the angel Gabriel first addresses the Blessed Virgin with the words: "Hail, full of grace; the Lord is with thee." While the Authorized Version of 1611 has the more familiar words: "Hail, thou that are highly favoured...", this is not a good translation from the original Koine Greek. An added caveat: the verb *kecharitomene* as found in the original text has a more profound meaning than either "highly favoured" or even *pleres charitos* – 'grace to the full.'

"Additionally, the verb tense is that of present perfect continuous, indicating that Gabriel recognizes in the Blessed Virgin a state of grace that originated in the past but continues into the present. In other words, her being "full of grace" did not occur at the Annunciation; Gabriel is stating her condition as something having already taken place.

"Of course, the question as to when she became "full of grace" has been debated throughout the history of the Church. A consensus of the early Church Fathers would argue that this took place at her conception. That is, she did not suffer the effects of original sin since God foreknew that she would become the mother of the Incarnate Son. This was not due to any merit of her own, but the grace of Baptism working backwards, as it were, to effect the same state that those who are washed in the laver of Baptism obtain under the New Covenant."

I hope that this day is one that also opens your heart in a special way to God's work in your life and your unique place in the drama of His redemption of the world by Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Treasurer reports that all members now have been mailed the 2013 dues billing and related opportunities to support the work of the Society. Several features to note:

- ✘ We've done this mailing earlier this year in response to members who want to make tax-deductible Annual Mass and/or general support donations before the end of the current tax year.

- ✘ Even if you owe no dues at this time, you are encouraged to make tax-deductible donations to the Society as well as purchase Society goods.
- ✘ Regarding donations, you may have noticed that from time to time various members are identified with “Ben.” after their names. This means that they are Society Benefactors, i.e., they have contributed a total of \$700 or more (excluding dues or goods purchases) over the years. You are invited to join their ranks if you are not already there. If you want to know your giving total to date, email the Treasurer at Ameraca453@aol.com.
- ✘ We encourage members who desire to purchase Society goods as Christmas gifts to do so without delay. We’ll watch for these orders and do our best to expedite their fulfillment.

Finally, please pray for the happy repose of the souls of our members whose deaths have been reported in recent weeks – Mr. Howard S. Greene, Sr., of Connecticut, and The Rev’d Dr. Ralph T. Walker, SSC, D.D., of Colorado. *Requiescant in pace*. Amen.

Fr. Bill Swatos
President

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