**Domestic Church Initiative**

**If have not yet returned your November Domestic Church Initiative, please send it to your child’s teacher today. All your responses will be shared with our report to Bishop Powers.**

**December 2020**

**Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Grade(s) of your children\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Return to your youngest child’s teacher)**

**Read:**

The doctrine of Mary's Immaculate Conception (i.e. freedom from original sin from the very start of her life) comes from Pius IX dogmatic definition of 1854 affirming Mary's Immaculate Conception. This declaration (Ineffabilis Deus) indicates that the teaching has been infallibly revealed by God through the History of the Church. There are also a number of scriptural passages which may be cited in support of the teaching. The angelic greeting in Lk 1:28 refers to Mary as "highly favored" or "full of grace." Both translations refer to the Greek term kecharitomene, which means a gift, favor or grace. The only way to be full of grace is to be free of all sin. God by a singular act working outside space and time could free Mary from sin from the moment she was first conceived because of the grace that was won by the future death of her son.

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At the announcement that she would give birth to "the Son of the Most High" without knowing man, by the power of the Holy Spirit, Mary responded with the obedience of faith, certain that "with God nothing will be impossible": "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be [done] to me according to your word."139 Thus, giving her consent to God's word, Mary becomes the mother of Jesus. Espousing the divine will for salvation wholeheartedly, without a single sin to restrain her, she gave herself entirely to the person and to the work of her Son; she did so in order to serve the mystery of redemption with him and dependent on him, by God's grace.

**Reflect on a page from the family resource**

December 8 is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Let us review as a family what the Immaculate Conception is and isn’t by reading pages 28 and 29 in our family resource. A copy is also attached.

**Act and Respond to your faith as a family:**

Sing advent and Christmas hymns, host an advent or Christmas party with special treats, while reading a Christmas story out loud. Examples: The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey; Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol; The Story of the Nativity or a book more suitable for young children, like The Legend of the Poinsettia by Tomie dePaola. Learn as a family one Christmas Carol and sing it before family prayer, before bed, before lighting the advent wreath, before opening presents at Christmas, or at another appropriate time.

Plan to attend Christmas Mass at Nativity of Our Lord in person or via the live stream. Then in one or two sentences share with us the book you read, the song you sang or an advent or Christmas tradition you practice as a family.

Respond electronically at: <https://forms.gle/K6eikWpcVFqGcXVZ8>

Or by returning the attached sheet to your child’s teacher. Thank you.