

## *Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the*

# BLESSED VIRGIN MARY



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The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary celebrates that Mary was conceived free of Original Sin and remained free from all personal sin throughout her life. The country of Nicaragua has a special custom to celebrate the Immaculate Conception called *La Gritería*. In this Latin American tradition, families build altars in their homes and invite guests to come and pray with them. In the United States, some parishes celebrate a Vigil Mass on December 7 in honor of the Immaculate Conception. Families build altars outside of the church to honor Mary. During the Mass, people are invited to use small shakers and plastic instruments to join in singing the songs. After the Mass, people gather outside to sing Marian songs while visiting the different altars and sharing food. The Immaculate Conception is the patroness of the United States. This solemnity is celebrated on December 8.



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## PRAYER TO THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Lord, our God,  
you willed that Mary be conceived free of Original Sin  
and remain free from all personal sin throughout her life.  
Grant, we pray, that through her intercession,  
we may be strengthened in our fight against sin.  
We ask this, through Jesus Christ, Our Lord.  
Amen.