

The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary – Dec. 7/8, 2018 – Reflection

"You always win!"

Before 2004, that was the grudging cry of Red Sox fans to Yankee fans every year ... somehow, somehow, the Evil Empire always beats us!

Before 2001, that was the cry of New England football fans, few that they were, to the rest of the NFL ... the rest of the league beat us and we were their powerless "Patsies".

In the Brady Bunch, it was the forever whine of the middle daughter about her older sister ... "You always win!" ... "Marcia, Marcia, Marcia!"

In just about every family, in almost every set of siblings, there seems to be the little brother or sister who feels cheated, feels life is unfair, feels that no matter what they do, "Mom always liked you better!" ... "You always win!"

According to the scriptural picture of the cosmic order, that seems to be precisely what prompted Lucifer and his league of malcontents to rebel against God ... "Better to reign in hell than to serve in heaven!" ... "You always win!"

The battle of good versus evil, the battle for the soul of humanity between God and Satan has raged since the Garden of Eden and shows no signs of abating in our own time. And, if you look at the course of

history - the world's and our own - it seems that the forces of darkness have had way more than their share of victories: eating the forbidden fruit; brother killing brother; idolatry; crucifixion; massacres; persecution; wars; holocausts; deceit; treachery; disasters; sorrow; hatred; bigotry; abuse and coverups; lust and rape; lies and denials. As we cry out in our shame, "The Devil made me do it!", it is as if we are saying to the Tempter, "You always win!"

Today's feast is powerful testimony that the victory does not always and will not ultimately belong to Satan. "On your belly shall you crawl and dirt shall you eat ... I will put enmity between your offspring and hers; He will strike at your head while you strike at His heel."

Mary's Immaculate Conception in her mother's womb is God's gift to her and all the human race. She was spared the stain of the Original Sin of Adam and Eve to lay the plans for God's final battle with the forces of evil. From Mary's Immaculate soul comes a Warrior King unafraid to raise the truth against the Prince of Lies; unafraid to meet hate with love; unafraid to battle the Prince of Darkness with the Light of God's saving will. And from Mary's Immaculate soul are born in the waters of Baptism an army of the Church to stand with her Divine Son in "lifting high the Cross, the love of Christ proclaiming, till all the world adore His sacred Name!"

Today reminds us that, despite valleys and setbacks, despite defections and despair, truth destroys lies, light overcomes darkness, hope dispels despair, good triumphs over evil, life cannot be chained by death. In Christ, we are victorious. God wins ... He always does!