



There's a good chance if you don't know someone named Mary, your name is Mary.

The name Mary, in all its many forms, has remained a very popular name, which parents all over the world continue to offer their children. It's no surprise the name is a phenomenon, given the holiness of Mary, a humble woman from Palestine.

Mary, the Blessed Mother of Jesus, is one of the most celebrated and beloved historical figures. She has a multitude of different names around the world. She is the only human being, conceived and born without original sin. Today, we celebrate her Immaculate Conception of Mary. There are a lot of feasts celebrating Mary, and rightly so, for the singular role she played in salvation history. She represents the best of who we have been, who we can be and who we are called to be.

Her Immaculate Conception is a holy day of the Church. In 1854, Pius IX solemnly proclaimed: "The most Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first instant of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege granted by almighty God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the savior of the human race, was preserved free from all stain of original sin."

The Gospel today is the annunciation that reminds us that Mary "found favor" with God and that it pleased the Almighty to give Mary a singular mission, one only she could do, for the salvation of the world.

Mary is considered the greatest saint of all time because she truly heard the word of God and acted upon it. She is a missionary to, with and for us all.

Immaculate Mary, Mother of Mission, pray for us.