

**"who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary"**  
*qui conceptus est de Spiritu Sancto, natus ex Maria Virgine,*

**Biblical Evidence: Luke 1:35:**

In Luke 1:35, the angel Gabriel tells Mary, "***The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.***" This verse confirms the divine nature of Jesus' conception. The involvement of the Holy Spirit signifies that Jesus' birth is a *divine act*, marking the beginning of *God's redemptive plan* in human history through the Incarnation.

Psalms 2:7, "**I will proclaim the Lord's decree: He said to me, 'You are my son; today I have become your father,'**" is a significant verse in Christian theology, often interpreted as a messianic prophecy pointing to Jesus Christ. The Church Fathers provided extensive commentary on this verse, emphasizing its importance in understanding *Jesus' divine sonship and messianic role*.

**Early Church Fathers' Interpretation of Psalm 2:7**

**1. Justin Martyr (c. 100 – c. 165 AD)**

Interpretation: Justin Martyr, in his "*Dialogue with Trypho*," sees Psalm 2:7 as a direct prophecy of Christ's divinity and eternal generation by God the Father. He argues that this verse demonstrates the unique sonship of Christ, distinguishing Him from other beings created by God.

Quote: "*For you should understand, Trypho, that the words, 'Behold, a virgin shall conceive,' uttered by Isaiah, refer to the birth of Christ... 'You are my Son; this day have I begotten you,' refers to the divine nature of Christ.*" (Dialogue with Trypho, Chapter 63)

**2. Origen (c. 184 – c. 253 AD)**

Interpretation: Origen interprets Psalm 2:7 as highlighting the eternal generation of the Son by the Father. He sees this verse as affirming that Christ's sonship is not by adoption but by nature, eternally begotten by the Father.

Quote: "The Father says to Him who is the Son by nature, '*You are My Son, this day I have begotten You.*' This signifies the timeless and eternal generation of the Son from the Father." (Commentary on John, Book 1, Chapter 24)

**3. Athanasius (c. 296 – 373 AD)**

Interpretation: Athanasius uses Psalm 2:7 to defend the doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son against Arianism, which denied the full divinity of Christ. He asserts that "today" does not imply a temporal beginning but rather the eternal present of God's timeless existence.

Quote: "*The term 'today' in the Scripture denotes eternity, not a specific time. Therefore, the Son is eternally begotten by the Father, existing co-eternally with Him.*" (Against the Arians, Discourse 2, Chapter 13)

**4. Augustine (354 – 430 AD)**

Interpretation: Augustine sees Psalm 2:7 as a declaration of Jesus' divine sonship, emphasizing that Christ is begotten of the Father before all ages. He interprets "today" as the eternal present, stressing that Christ's begetting is outside of time.

Quote: "'*You are My Son, this day have I begotten You,*' is not to be understood as if it happened in time, but rather in the eternal 'today' of God's timeless existence." (Exposition on the Psalms, Psalm 2)

**5. Cyril of Jerusalem (c. 313 – 386 AD)**

Interpretation: Cyril emphasizes that Psalm 2:7 reveals the mystery of the Son's eternal generation and his manifestation in time through the Incarnation. He views the verse as affirming both the eternal divinity and the temporal birth of Christ.

Quote: "The Father says, 'You are My Son; this day I have begotten You,' to declare the eternal generation of the Son and His temporal manifestation in the flesh." (Catechetical Lectures, Lecture 10)

### **Fathers of the Church:**

- St. Irenaeus (AD 130–202): St. Irenaeus emphasized the obedience of Mary and Jesus as pivotal in God's plan of salvation. He compared Mary to Eve, describing her as the new Eve who, through her obedience, contrasts Eve's disobedience. In "*Against Heresies*" (V.19.1), he wrote, "***The Virgin Mary, being obedient to his word, received from an angel the glad tidings that she would bear God.***" This highlights the significance of Mary's fiat (her yes) to God's plan, which allowed the Incarnation to take place.
- St. Justin Martyr (c. 100 – 165): St. Justin Martyr also made a connection between the Virgin Mary and the story of salvation. In "*Dialogue with Trypho*" (100), he stated, "***He became man by the Virgin, in order that the disobedience which proceeded from the serpent might receive its destruction in the same manner in which it derived its origin.***" Here, he presents Mary as the instrument through which Jesus entered the world to reverse the effects of sin introduced by Eve, bringing redemption where disobedience once reigned.

### Saints: St. Maximilian Kolbe:

St. Maximilian Kolbe had a profound devotion to Mary, viewing her as the Mediatrix of all graces. He famously said, "***Never be afraid of loving the Blessed Virgin too much. You can never love her more than Jesus did.***" Kolbe's devotion reflects the Catholic understanding of Mary's unique role in the Incarnation and in the spiritual life of believers. His perspective encourages deep love and reverence for Mary, recognizing her special place in salvation history.

### Catechism (CCC 484-511):

- The Incarnation and Miraculous Conception: The Catechism of the Catholic Church explains the mystery of the Incarnation, where God the Son took on human flesh (CCC 484). This was made possible through the miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit, affirming that Jesus was conceived without a human father, marking His divine origin.
- Perpetual Virginity of Mary: The CCC also discusses the perpetual virginity of Mary (CCC 496-511). Mary's virginity is seen as a sign of her total dedication to God and her unique role in the divine plan. The Church teaches that Mary remained a virgin before, during, and after the birth of Jesus, highlighting her purity and special vocation.

### The Pristine Garden:

Imagine a pristine garden untouched by any blemish, a place of pure beauty and tranquility. This image represents Mary's immaculate conception, where she was conceived without original sin. ***Just as a pure garden would be a fitting place for the new Adam,*** Jesus, Mary's immaculate conception made her a fitting vessel to bear the Son of God. This analogy underscores the purity and sanctity of Mary, preparing her to be the Mother of Jesus.

## **Summary**

The phrase "*who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary*" encapsulates the mystery of the Incarnation and the special role of Mary in salvation history. Reflections from the Fathers of the Church, such as St. Irenaeus and St. Justin Martyr, emphasize Mary's obedience and her role as the new Eve, contributing to the redemption of humanity. Saints like St. Maximilian Kolbe highlight the profound love and devotion due to Mary, encouraging believers to honor her as Jesus did. The Catechism elucidates the miraculous nature of Jesus' conception by the Holy Spirit and Mary's perpetual virginity, underscoring her unique place in God's plan. The analogy of a pristine garden helps illustrate Mary's immaculate conception, preparing her to bear the new Adam, Jesus. Biblical evidence from Luke 1:35 confirms the divine intervention in Jesus' conception, marking the fulfillment of God's promise of salvation. Together, these insights deepen our understanding and appreciation of this key article of the Creed.