

Daughters of Mary Immaculate Conception



Our Mission

Our mission consists of striving with diligence and alertness to sanctifying our souls. Let us strive with diligence and alertness to sanctify our souls, “in order to perfect the saints for a work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.”

Our dedicated life is apostolic. We offer ourselves as an individual with all different kinds of talents and tasks flowing together in community life. The community takes up our fraternal union with Christ, the unity of our life in it and the life in the spirit of our Congregation and transforms it into a testimony to our growth in the grace of dedication, and into a proof of the authenticity of Christ’s mission in the world.

Our History

Antoun Zabuni is the founder of the Congregation of the Daughters of Mary Immaculate Conception. He was born into a pious family in Mosel, Iraq on January 17, 1883, on the feast day of St. Anthony of Egypt, the father of the monks. In the year 1895 he entered the minor seminary of St. John the Evangelist, in Mosel. As a seminarian he was devoted to his studies and lived a life of virtue and devotion. He was ordained a priest on May 15, 1907 by Patriarch Emmanuel II Toma.

The war of World War I broke out in Iraq and the consequences of the war left many people hungry, in poverty and without an opportunity for education. Specifically, many people left the villages and fled to Baghdad, in order to find any kind of work. Here, women began to work various jobs, even if it meant abandoning their faith and converting to Islam in order to make a living and be able to work. This devastated Father Antoun and increased his desire to start a congregation for women.

He wrote a letter to the Patriarch saying, “I had a lot of conviction that we need to start in our Chaldean Church a religious congregation of women. I understand that consecrated woman could help in this time of chaos. They can help the clergy with the great poverty, the homeless children, and even with pastoral needs of the community. I have a desire to begin this project and with much time spent before the Blessed Sacrament I see it is greatly needed.”

After much prayer and discernment, the desire became a reality, and permission was granted to Father Antoun to begin the first congregation of women in the Chaldean Rite on August 7, 1922. Because of his great devotion to the Blessed Mother, the Congregation was dedicated and consecrated to Mary Immaculate Conception.

Our Identity

The Congregation of the Chaldean Daughters of Mary Immaculate Conception is an apostolic Congregation of patriarchal right. It was founded in Baghdad on August 7, 1922, at the time of Patriarch Mar Yousif Emmanuel II Toma, for the good of the Church and the world.

Our Goal

Our Congregation aims at a life of contemplative unity with God, striving for holiness by practice of the vows of the evangelical counsels, a participation of the spirit of the beatitudes and the observance of our Rule. Our Congregation is a center of apostolic radiation and prayer. Each religious attempt to discover the will of God for herself and for the salvation of souls. Thus, one will become a sign and a testimony of conversion and consecration to God.

Our Spirituality

Our spirituality proceeds from the spirituality of our patroness, the Immaculate Virgin, who knew Jesus profoundly, shared with Him redemption and still offers Him to the world as light and salvation. Following in her example, we advance step by step in our life of obedience, service, humility and purity.

Formation

Pre – Postulancy: A person interested in exploring the possibility of a call to be a Daughter of Mary Immaculate Conception will be asked to have contact with an appointed sister over a period of time, to help discern God’s will for her. The young woman then begins a regular relationship with the community. She tries to clarify her motives, her desires, her relationships, and her fears as she considers the religious life. During this time the candidate should be experiencing deep dialogue with God, with herself, and with others.

Postulancy: Postulants will live in the community of the Congregation for at least one year. The Directress will guide the Postulants in their prayer and to help them to discern their calling, to grow in their relationship with God and their community, and to foster their desire to serve God’s people. At the end this period, Postulant and her Directress discern, together and individually, that she is ready to begin her Novitiate.

Novitiate: Next comes the period of Novitiate, which lasts for 2 years. Firstly, one full canonical year is spent in the novitiate, which will enable her to know, and to experience life lived in community. Here she will deepen her life in Christ by her personal and community prayer,

meditation on the Holy Scripture, and in learning the spirituality and constitution of the sisters of Daughters of Mary Immaculate Conception. In the second year as a novice she is introduced to the congregation's various works of service, while continuing her studies in the spiritual life.

Temporary Vows: After these two years, the Novice prepares to make her First Profession of obedience, chastity, and poverty. She may renew these vows every year for a period of six years before her final commitment. During these years she is supported by the community and continues her spiritual formation. She will be provided opportunities for further studies needed in ministry or may participate in the ministries according to her capacities and abilities.

Final Vows: Then comes the time for her Final Profession, and the temporary professed sister through the deepening of a special relationship with Jesus, the growing in spirituality, the experiences gain in ministries, the sharing life and experiences with her Sisters will enable her to make an appropriate decision in her final act of consecration to God in the Congregation of Daughters of Mary Immaculate Conception. Right before her final vows every sister will be prepared by her superior for a "second novitiate" which consists of a spiritual renewal, to better prepare to give herself totally to Christ.

Our Consecrated Life through the Vows

The Vow of Obedience:

By our vow of obedience, we offer our will with ourselves as a total offering to God. Through the eyes of faith, we submit to our superiors, who represent God when they direct us to the service of all our brethren in Christ. We promise not to decide the course of our life by ourselves, but to accept whatever task is given us, taking the Constitution of the Congregation as the rule of our conduct.

The Vow of Poverty:

The vow of poverty does not mean despising the world and the good things God has created and blessed. But the Lord intends that we make use of them for His love. By this vow we become witnesses to the poverty of the Lord Jesus who was born in a manger and lived a life of self-denial. For His sake we give up all personal use of our resources, and we commit ourselves to consider the fruit of our work for the common good, to remain free to be children of God.

The Vow of Chastity:

The vow of chastity is a gift of God that cannot be comprehended except by the light of faith. It is a sublime gift that makes us free from the attachment to a natural family, so that we can strive to realize the perfect love of the Lord. By chastity we make ourselves "a sacrifice holy and pleasing to God" (Romans 12:1) perfect chastity requires purity of mind, heart and body. It grants a great freedom for the sake of the love of God and the love for all that comes from Him and goes to Him.

Daily Schedule for the Novitiate Home:

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| 5:30a.m | Rise |
| 5:45a.m | Chaldean Liturgical Prayer (Sapra) |
| 6:00a.m | Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament |
| 7:30a.m | Holy Mass |
| 8:30a.m | Breakfast |
| 9:00a.m | Convent Duties |
| 12:30p.m | Rosary, Angelus, and Examination of Conscience |
| 1.00p.m | Lunch |
| 1:45p.m | Personal Activities |
| 3:30p.m | Convent Duties, Study, Personal Prayer Time |
| 5:30p.m | Chaldean Liturgical Prayer (Ramsha) |
| 5:50p.m | Spiritual Reading, Rosary, and Examination of Conscience |
| 7:00p.m | Dinner |
| 8:00p.m | Community Recreation |
| 9:00p.m | Night Prayer and Grand Silence |