

Virgin Birth of Christ

GET THE
CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPEDIA ON
CD-ROM



This entire website is available on CD-ROM.
Includes the Catholic Encyclopedia,
Church Fathers, Summa, Bible and more...
SALE: 50% off if you buy now...
FREE Shipping Worldwide...

[Click here...](#)

The dogma which teaches that the Blessed Mother of Jesus Christ was a virgin before, during, and after the conception and birth of her Divine Son.

Councils and creeds

The virginity of our Blessed Lady was defined under anathema in the third canon of the Lateran Council held in the time of Pope Martin I, A.D. 649. The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, as recited in the Mass, expresses belief in Christ "incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary"; the Apostles' Creed professes that Jesus Christ "was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary"; the older form of the same creed uses the expression: "born of the Holy Ghost and of the Virgin Mary". These professions show:

- That the body of Jesus Christ was not sent down from Heaven, nor taken from earth as was that of Adam, but that its matter was supplied by Mary;
- that Mary co-operated in the formation of Christ's body as every other mother co-operates in the formation of the body of her child, since otherwise Christ could not be said to be born of Mary just as Eve cannot be said to be born of Adam;
- that the germ in whose development and growth into the Infant Jesus, Mary co-operated, was fecundated not by any human action, but by the Divine power attributed to the Holy Ghost;
- that the supernatural influence of the Holy Ghost extended to the birth of Jesus Christ, not merely preserving Mary's integrity, but also causing Christ's birth or external generation to reflect his eternal birth from the Father in this, that "the Light from Light" proceeded from his mother's womb as a light shed on the world; that the "power of the Most High" passed through the barriers of nature without injuring them; that "the body of the Word" formed by the Holy Ghost penetrated another body after the manner of spirits.

Church Fathers

The perpetual virginity of our Blessed Lady was taught and proposed to our belief not merely by the councils and creeds, but also by the early Fathers. The words of the prophet Isaias (vii, 14) are understood in this sense by

- St. Irenaeus (III, 21; see Eusebius, *Church History* V.8),
- Origen (Adv. Cels., I, 35),
- Tertullian (Adv. Marcion., III, 13; Adv. Judæos, IX),
- St. Justin (*Dialogue with Trypho* 84),
- St. John Chrysostom (Hom. v in Matth., n. 3; in Isa., VII, n. 5);
- St. Epiphanius (Hær., xxviii, n. 7),
- Eusebius (Demonstrat. ev., VIII, i),
- Rufinus (Lib. fid., 43),
- St. Basil (in Isa., vii, 14; Hom. in S. Generat. Christi, n. 4, if St. Basil be the author of these two passages),
- St. Jerome and Theodoretus (in Isa., vii, 14),
- St. Isidore (Adv. Judæos, I, x, n. 3),
- St. Ildefonsus (De perpetua virginit. s. Mariæ, iii).

St. Jerome devotes his entire treatise against Helvidius to the perpetual virginity of Our Blessed Lady (see especially nos. 4, 13, 18).

The contrary doctrine is called:

- "madness and blasphemy" by Gennadius (De dogm. eccl., lxix),
- "madness" by Origen (in Luc., h, vii),
- "sacrilege" by St. Ambrose (De instit. virg., V, xxxv),
- "impiety and smacking of atheism" by Philostorgius (VI, 2),
- "perfidy" by St. Bede (hom. v, and xxii),
- "full of blasphemies" by the author of Prædestin. (i, 84),
- "perfidy of the Jews" by Pope Siricius (ep. ix, 3),
- "heresy" by St. Augustine (De Hær. h., lvi).

St. Epiphanius probably excels all others in his invectives against the opponents of Our Lady's virginity (Hær., lxxviii, 1, 11, 23).

Sacred Scripture

There can be no doubt as to the Church's teaching and as to the existence of an early Christian tradition maintaining the perpetual virginity of our Blessed Lady and consequently the virgin birth of Jesus Christ. The mystery of the virginal conception is furthermore taught by the third Gospel and confirmed by the first. According to St. Luke (1:34-35), "Mary said to the angel: How shall this be done, because I know not man? And the angel answering, said to her: The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." The intercourse of man is excluded in the conception of Our Blessed Lord. According to St. Matthew, St. Joseph, when perplexed by the pregnancy of Mary, is told by the angel: "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost" (1:20).

Sources of this doctrine

Whence did the Evangelists derive their information? As far as we know, only two created beings were witnesses of the annunciation, the angel and the Blessed Virgin. Later on the angel informed St. Joseph concerning the mystery. We do not know whether Elizabeth, though "filled with the Holy Ghost", learned the full truth supernaturally, but we may suppose that Mary confided the secret both to her friend and her spouse, thus completing the partial revelation received by both.

Between these data and the story of the Evangelists there is a gap which cannot be filled from any express clue furnished by either Scripture or tradition. If we compare the narrative of the first Evangelist with that of the third, we find that St. Matthew may have drawn his information from the knowledge of St. Joseph independently of any information furnished by Mary. The first Gospel merely states (1:18): "When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child, of the Holy Ghost." St. Joseph could supply these facts either from personal knowledge or from the words of the angel: "That which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost." The narrative of St. Luke, on the other hand, must ultimately be traced back to the testimony of Our Blessed Lady, unless we are prepared to admit unnecessarily another independent revelation. The evangelist himself points to Mary as the source of his account of the infancy of Jesus, when he says that Mary kept all these words in her heart (2:19, 51). Zahn [1] does not hesitate to say that Mary is pointed out by these expressions as the bearer of the traditions in Luke 1 and 2.

A. How did St. Luke derive his account from the Blessed Virgin? It has been supposed by some that he received his information from Mary herself. In the Middle Ages he is at times called the "chaplain" of Mary [2]; J. Nirsch [3] calls St. Luke the Evangelist of the Mother of God, believing that he wrote the history of the infancy from her mouth and heart. Besides, there is the implied testimony of the Evangelist, who assures us twice that Mary had kept all these words in her heart. But this does not necessitate an immediate oral communication of the history of the infancy on the part of Mary; it merely shows that Mary is the ultimate source of the account. If St. Luke had received the history of the infancy from the Blessed Virgin by way of oral communication, its presentation in the third Gospel naturally would show the form and style of its Greek author. In point of fact the history of the infancy as found in the third Gospel (1:5 to 2:52) betrays in its contents, its language, and style a Jewish-Christian source. The whole passage reads like a chapter from the First Book of Machabees; Jewish customs, and laws and peculiarities are introduced without any further explanation; the "Magnificat", the "Benedictus", and the "Nunc dimittis" are filled with national Jewish ideas. As to the style and language of the history of the infancy, both are so thoroughly Semitic that the passage must be retranslated into Hebrew or Aramaic in order to be properly appreciated. We must conclude, then, that St. Luke's immediate source for the history of the infancy was not an oral, but a written one.

B. It is hardly probable that Mary herself wrote the history of the infancy as was supposed by A. Plummer [4]; it is more credible that the Evangelist used a memoir written by a Jewish Christian, possibly a convert Jewish priest (cf. Acts 6:7), perhaps even a member or friend of Zachary's family [5]. But, whatever may be the immediate source of St. Luke's account, the Evangelist knows that he has "diligently attained to all things from the beginning", according to the testimony of those "who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word" (Luke 1:2).

As to the original language of St. Luke's source, we may agree with the judgment of Lagarde [6] that the first two chapters of St. Luke present a Hebrew rather than a Greek or an Aramaic colouring. Writers have not been wanting who have tried to prove that St. Luke's written source for his first two chapters was composed in Hebrew [7]. But these proofs are not cogent; St. Luke's Hebraisms may have their origin in an Aramaic source, or even in a Greek original composed in the language of the Septuagint. Still, considering the fact that Aramaic was the language commonly spoken in Palestine at that time, we must conclude that Our Blessed Lady's secret was originally written in Aramaic, though it must have been translated into Greek before St. Luke utilized it [8]. As the Greek of Luke 2:41-52 is more idiomatic than the language of Luke 1:4-2:40, it has been inferred that the Evangelist's written source reached only to 2:40; but as in 2:51, expressions are repeated which occur in 2:19, it may be safely inferred that both passages were taken from the same source.

The Evangelist recast the source of the history of the infancy before incorporating it into his Gospel; for the use of words and expressions in Luke 1 and 2 agrees with the language in the following chapters [9]. Harnack [10] and Dalman [11] suggest that St. Luke may be the original author of his first two chapters, adopting the language and style of the Septuagint; but Vogel [12] and Zahn [13] maintain that such a literary feat would be impossible for a Greek-speaking writer. What has been said explains why it is quite impossible to reconstruct

St. Luke's original source; the attempt of Resch [14] to reconstruct the original Gospel of the infancy or the source of the first two chapters of the first and third Gospel and the basis of the prologue to the fourth, is a failure, in spite of its ingenuity. Conrady [15] believed that he had found the common source of the canonical history of the infancy in the so-called "Protevangelium Jacobi", which, according to him, was written in Hebrew by an Egyptian Jew about A.D. 120, and was soon after translated into Greek; it should be kept in mind, however, that the Greek text is not a translation, but the original, and a mere compilation from the canonical Gospels. All we can say therefore, concerning St. Luke's source for his history of the infancy of Jesus is reduced to the scanty information that it must have been a Greek translation of an Aramaic document based, in the last instance, on the testimony of Our Blessed Lady.

The Virgin Birth in modern theology

Modern theology adhering to the principle of historical development, and denying the possibility of any miraculous intervention in the course of history, cannot consistently admit the historical actuality of the virgin birth. According to modern views, Jesus was really the son of Joseph and Mary and was endowed by an admiring posterity with the halo of Divinity; the story of his virgin birth was in keeping with the myths concerning the extraordinary births of the heroes of other nations [16]; the original text of the Gospels knew nothing of the virgin birth [17]. Without insisting on the arbitrariness of the philosophical assumptions implied in the position of modern theology, we shall briefly review its critical attitude towards the text of the Gospels and its attempts to account for the early Christian tradition concerning the virgin birth of Christ.

Integrity of the Gospel text

Wellhausen [18] contended that the original text of the third Gospel began with our present third chapter, the first two chapters being a later addition. But Harnack seems to have foreseen this theory before it was proposed by Wellhausen; for he showed that the two chapters in question belonged to the author of the third Gospel and of the Acts [19]. Holtzmann [20] considers Luke 1:34-35 as a later addition; Hillmann [21] believes that the words *hos enouizeto* of Luke 3:23 ought to be considered in the same light. Weinel [22] believes that the removal of the words *epei andra ou ginosko* from Luke 1:34 leaves the third Gospel without a cogent proof for the virgin birth; Harnack not only agrees with the omissions of Holtzmann and Hillmann, but deletes also the word *parthenos* from Luke 1:27 [23]. Other friends of modern theology are rather sceptical as to the solidity of these text-critical theories; Hilgenfeld [24], Clement [25], and Gunkel [26] reject Harnack's arguments without reserve. Bardenhewer [27] weighs them singly and finds them wanting.

In the light of the arguments for the genuineness of the portions of the third Gospel rejected by the above named critics, it is hard to understand how they can be omitted by any unprejudiced student of the sacred text.

- They are found in all manuscripts, translations, and early Christian citations, in all printed editions — in brief, in all the documents considered by the critics as reliable witnesses for the genuineness of a text.
- Furthermore, in the narrative of St. Luke, each verse is like a link in a chain, so that no verse can be removed as an interpolation without destroying the whole.
- Moreover, verses 34 and 35 are in the Lucan history what the keystone is in an arch, what a diamond is in its setting; the text of the Gospel without these two verses resembles an unfinished arch, a setting bereft of its precious stones [28].
- Finally, the Lucan account left us by the critics is not in keeping with the rest of the Evangelist's narrative. According to the critics, verses 26-33 and 36-38 relate the promise of the birth of the Messiah, the son of Joseph and Mary, just as the verses immediately preceding relate the promise of the birth of the precursor, the son of Zachary and Elizabeth. But there is a great difference: the precursor's story is filled with miracles — as Zachary's sudden dumbness, John's wonderful conception — while

the account of Christ's conception offers nothing extraordinary; in the one case the angel is sent to the child's father, Zachary, while in the other the angel appears to Mary; in the one case Elizabeth is said to have conceived "after those days", while there is nothing added about Mary's conception [29]. The complete traditional text of the Gospel explains these differences, but the critically mutilated text leaves them inexplicable.

The friends of modern theology at first believed that they possessed a solid foundation for denying the virgin birth in the Codex Syrus Sinaiticus discovered by Mrs. Lewis and Mrs. Gibson in 1892, more accurately investigated in 1893, published in 1894, and supplemented in 1896. According to this codex, Matthew 1:16 reads: "Joseph to whom was espoused Mary the Virgin, begot Jesus who is called Christ." Still, the Syriac translator cannot have been ignorant of the virgin birth. Why did he leave the expression "the virgin" in the immediate context? How did he understand verses 18, 20, and 25, if he did not know anything of the virgin birth? Hence, either the Syriac text has been slightly altered by a transcriber (only one letter had to be changed) or the translator understood the word *begot* of conventional, not of carnal, fatherhood, a meaning it has in verses 8 and 12.

Non-historical source of the Virgin Birth

The opponents of the historical actuality of the virgin birth grant that either the Evangelists or the interpolators of the Gospels borrowed their material from an early Christian tradition, but they endeavour to show that this tradition has no solid historical foundation. About A.D. 153 St. Justin (*First Apology* 21) told his pagan readers that the virgin birth of Jesus Christ ought not to seem incredible to them, since many of the most esteemed pagan writers spoke of a number of sons of Zeus. About A.D. 178 the Platonic philosopher Celsus ridiculed the virgin birth of Christ, comparing it with the Greek myths of Danae, Melanippe, and Antiope; Origen (c. Cels. I, xxxvii) answered that Celsus wrote more like a buffoon than a philosopher. But modern theologians again derive the virgin birth of Our Lord from unhistorical sources, though their theories do not agree.

The Pagan Origin Theory

A first class of writers have recourse to pagan mythology in order to account for the early Christian tradition concerning the virgin birth of Jesus. Usener [30] argues that the early Gentile Christians must have attributed to Christ what their pagan ancestors had attributed to their pagan heroes; hence the Divine sonship of Christ is a product of the religious thought of Gentile Christians. Hillmann [31] and Holtzmann [32] agree substantially with Usener's theory. Conrady [33] found in the Virgin Mary a Christian imitation of the Egyptian goddess Isis, the mother of Horus; but Holtzmann [34] declares that he cannot follow this "daring construction without a feeling of fear and dizziness", and Usener [35] is afraid that his friend Conrady moves on a precipitous track. Soltau [36] tries to transfer the supernatural origin of Augustus to Jesus, but Lobstein [37] fears that Soltau's attempt may throw discredit on science itself, and Kreyher [38] refutes the theory more at length.

In general, the derivation of the virgin birth from pagan mythology through the medium of Gentile Christians implies several inexplicable difficulties:

- Why should the Christian recently converted from paganism revert to his pagan superstitions in his conception of Christian doctrines?
- How could the product of pagan thought find its way among Jewish Christians without leaving as much as a vestige of opposition on the part of the Jewish Christians?
- How could this importation into Jewish Christianity be effected at an age early enough to produce the Jewish Christian sources from which either the Evangelists or the interpolators of the Gospels derived their material?
- Why did not the relatives of Christ's parents protest against the novel views concerning Christ's origin?

Besides, the very argument on which rests the importation of the virgin birth from pagan myths into Christianity is fallacious, to say the least. Its major premise assumes that similar phenomena not merely may, but must, spring from similar causes; its minor premise contends that Christ's virgin birth and the mythical divine sonships of the pagan world are similar phenomena, a contention false on the face of it.

The Jewish Origin Theory (Isaiah 7:14)

A second class of writers derive the early Christian tradition of the virgin birth from Jewish Christian influence. Harnack [39] is of the opinion that the virgin birth originated from Isaiah 7:14; Lobstein [40] adds the "poetic traditions surrounding the cradle of Isaac, Samson, and Samuel" as another source of the belief in the virgin birth. Modern theology does not grant that Isaiah 7:14, contains a real prophecy fulfilled in the virgin birth of Christ; it must maintain, therefore, that St. Matthew misunderstood the passage when he said: "Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which the Lord spoke by the prophet, saying; Behold a virgin shall be with child, and bring forth a son," etc. (1:22-23). How do Harnack and Lobstein explain such a misunderstanding on the part of the Evangelist? There is no indication that the Jewish contemporaries of St. Matthew understood the prophet's words in this sense. Hillmann [41] proves that belief in the virgin birth is not contained in the Old Testament, and therefore cannot have been taken from it. Dalman [42] maintains that the Jewish people never expected a fatherless birth of the Messiah, and that there exists no vestige of such a Jewish interpretation of Isaiah 7:14.

Those who derive the virgin birth from Isaiah 7:14, must maintain that an accidental misinterpretation of the Prophet by the Evangelist replaced historic truth among the early Christians in spite of the better knowledge and the testimony of the disciples and kindred of Jesus. Zahn [43] calls such a supposition "altogether fantastic"; Usener [44] pronounce the attempt to make Isaiah 7:14 the origin of the virgin birth, instead of its seal, an inversion of the natural order. Though Catholic exegesis endeavours to find in the Old Testament prophetic indications of the virgin birth, still it grants that the Jewish Christians arrived at the full meaning of Isaiah 7:14, only through its accomplishment [45].

The Syncretic Theory

There is a third theory which endeavours to account for the prevalence of the doctrine of the virgin birth among the early Jewish Christians. Gunkel [46] grants that the idea of virgin birth is a pagan idea, wholly foreign to the Jewish conception of God; but he also grants that this idea could not have found its way into early Jewish Christianity through pagan influence. Hence he believes that the idea had found its way among the Jews in pre-Christian times, so that the Judaism which flowed directly into early Christianity had undergone a certain amount of syncretism. Hilgenfeld [47] tries to derive the Christian teaching of the virgin birth neither from classical paganism nor from pure Judaism, but from the Essene depreciation of marriage. The theories of both Gunkel and Hilgenfeld are based on airy combinations rather than historical evidence. Neither writer produces any historical proof for his assertions. Gunkel, indeed, incidentally draws attention to Parsee ideas, to the Buddha legend, and to Roman and Greek fables. But the Romans and Greeks did not exert such a notable influence on pre-Christian Judaism; and that the Buddha legend reached as far as Palestine cannot be seriously maintained by Gunkel [48]. Even Harnack [49] regards the theory that the idea of virgin birth penetrated among the Jews through Parsee influence, as an unprovable assumption.

**Language Professors
Hate Him!**



Doctor's discovery revealed the secret to speaking any language in just 10 days. Watch this shocking video and discover how you can rapidly learn any language in just 10 days using this sneaky linguistic secret... Free from the computer... Free from memorization... and absolutely guaranteed!

[Click to Watch Video Now](#)

Pimsleur Approach

Sources

- [1] "Einleitung in das Neue Testament", 2nd ed., II, 406, Leipzig, 1900
- [2] cf. Du Cange, "Gloss. med. et inf. latinitatis", s.v. "Capellani"; ed. L. Favre
- [3] "Das Grab der heiligen Jungfrau Maria", 51, Mainz, 1896
- [4] "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel of St. Luke" in "The International Critical Commentary", Edinburgh, 1896, p. 7
- [5] cf. Blass, "Evangelium secundum Lucam", xxiii, Leipzig, 1897
- [6] "Mitteilungen", III, 345, Göttingen, 1889
- [7] cf. Gunkel, "Zum religions-geschichtl. Verständnis des Neuen Testaments", pp. 67 sq., Göttingen, 1903
- [8] cf. Bardenhewer, "Maria Verkündigung" in "Biblische Studien", X, v, pp. 32 sq., Freiburg, 1905
- [9] cf. Feine, "Eine vorkanonische Ueberlieferung des Lukas in Evangelium und Apostelgeschichte", Gotha, 1891, p. 19; Zimmermann, "Theol. Stud. und Krit.", 1903, 250 sqq.
- [10] Sitzungsber. der Berliner Akad., 1900, pp. 547 sqq.
- [11] "Die Worte Jesu", I, 31 sq., Leipzig, 1898
- [12] "Zur Charakteristik des Lukas nach Sprache und Stil", Leipzig, 1897, p. 33
- [13] Einleitung, 2nd ed., ii, 406
- [14] "Das Kindheitsevangelium nach Lukas und Matthäus" in "Texte und Untersuchungen zur Gesch. der altchristl. Literatur", X, v, 319, Leipzig, 1897
- [15] "Die Quelle der kanonischen Kindheitsgeschichte Jesus", Göttingen, 1900
- [16] Gunkel, "Zum religionsgesch. Verst. des N.T.", p. 65, Göttingen, 1903
- [17] Usener, "Geburt und Kindheit Christi" in "Zeitschrift für die neutest. Wissenschaft", IV, 1903, 8
- [18] "Das Evangelium Lukä", Berlin, 1904
- [19] Sitzungsberichte der Kgl. preuss. Akad. der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, 1900, 547
- [20] "Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament", I, 31 sq., Freiburg, 1889
- [21] "Die Kindheitsgeschichte Jesu nach Lukas kritisch untersucht" in "Jahrb. für protest. Theol.", XVII, 225 sqq., 1891
- [22] "Die Auslegung des apostolischen Bekenntnisses von F. Kattenbusch und die neut. Forschung" in "Zeitschrift für d. n. t. Wissensch.", II, 37 sqq., 1901; cf. Kattenbusch, "Das apostolische Symbol", II, 621, Leipzig, 1897-1900
- [23] Zeitschrift für d. n. t. Wissensch., 53 sqq., 1901
- [24] "Die Geburt Jesu aus der Jungfrau in dem Lukasevangelium" in "Zeitschr. für wissenschaftl. Theologie", XLIV, 313 sqq., 1901
- [25] Theol. Literaturzeitung, 1902, 299
- [26] op. cit., p. 68
- [27] "Maria Verkündigung", pp. 8-12, Freiburg, 1905
- [28] cf. Feine, "Eine vorkanonische Ueberlieferung", 39, Gotha, 1891

- [29] Bardenhewer, op. cit., 13 sqq.; Gunkel, op. cit., 68
- [30] "Religionsgeschichtl. Untersuchungen", I, 69 sqq., Bonn, 1899; "Geburt und Kindheit Christi" in "Zeitschrift für d. n. t. Wissensch.", IV, 1903, 15 sqq.
- [31] Jahrb. f. protest. Theol., XVII, 1891, 231 sqq.
- [32] "Lehrb. d. n. t. Theol.", I, 413 sqq., Freiburg, 1897
- [33] "Die Quelle der kanonisch. Kindheitsgesch. Jesus", Göttingen, 1900, 278 sqq.
- [34] Theol. Literaturzeit., 1901, p. 136
- [35] Zeitschr. f. d. n. t. Wissensch., 1903, p. 8
- [36] "Die Geburtsgeschichte Jesu Christi", Leipzig, 1902, p. 24
- [37] Theol. Literaturzeitung, 1902, p. 523
- [38] "Die jungfräuliche Geburt des Herrn", Gutersloh, 1904
- [39] "Lehrb. d. Dogmengesch.", 3rd ed., I, 95 sq., Freiburg, 1894
- [40] "Die Lehre von der übernatürlichen Geburt Christi", 2nd ed., 28-31, Freiburg, 1896
- [41] "Jahrb. f. protest. Theol.", 1891, XVII, 233 sqq., 1891
- [42] Die Worte Jesu, I, Leipzig, 1898, 226
- [43] "Das Evangelium des Matthäus ausgelegt", 2nd ed., Leipzig, 1905, pp. 83 sq.
- [44] "Religionsgesch. Untersuch.", I, Bonn, 1889, 75
- [45] Bardenhewer op. cit., 23; cf. Flunk, Zeitschrift f. kathol. Theol.", XXVIII, 1904, 663
- [46] op. cit., 65 sqq.
- [47] "Zeitschr. f. wissensch. Theol.", 1900, XLIII, 271; 1901, XLIV, 235
- [48] cf. Oldenberg, "Theol. Literaturzeit.", 1905, 65 sq.
- [49] "Dogmengesch.", 3rd ed., Freiburg, 1894, 96

Besides the works cited in the course of this article, we may draw attention to the dogmatic treatises on the supernatural origin of the Humanity of Christ through the Holy Ghost from the Virgin Mary especially: WILHELM AND SCANNELL, *Manual of Catholic Theology*, II (London and New York, 1898), 105 sqq.; 208 sqq.; HUNTER, *Outlines of Dogmatic Theology*, II (New York, 1896), 567 sqq.; also to the principal commentaries on Matt., i, ii; Luke, i, ii. Among Protestant writings we may mention the tr. of LOBSTEIN, *The Virgin Birth of Christ* (London, 1903); BRIGGS, *Criticism and the Dogma of the Virgin Birth in North Am. Rev.* (June, 1906); ALLEN in *Interpreter* (Febr., 1905), 115 sqq.; (Oct., 1905), 52 sqq.; CARR in *Expository Times*, XVIII, 522, 1907; USENER, s.v. *Nativity in Encyclo. Bibl.*, III, 3852; CHEYNE, *Bible Problems* (1905), 89 sqq.; CARPENTER, *Bible in the Nineteenth Century* (1903), 491 sqq.; RANDOLPH, *The Virgin Birth of Our Lord* (1903).

About this page

APA citation. Maas, A. (1912). Virgin Birth of Christ. In *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. New York: Robert Appleton Company. Retrieved June 28, 2012 from New Advent: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15448a.htm>

MLA citation. Maas, Anthony. "Virgin Birth of Christ." *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. Vol. 15. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1912. 28 Jun. 2012 <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15448a.htm>>.

Transcription. This article was transcribed for New Advent by Douglas J. Potter. Dedicated to the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Ecclesiastical approbation. *Nihil Obstat*. October 1, 1912. Remy Lafort, S.T.D., Censor. *Imprimatur*. +John Cardinal Farley, Archbishop of New York.

Contact information. The editor of New Advent is Kevin Knight. My email address is feedback732@newadvent.org. (To help fight spam, this address might change occasionally.) Regrettably, I can't reply to

every letter, but I greatly appreciate your feedback — especially notifications about typographical errors and inappropriate ads.