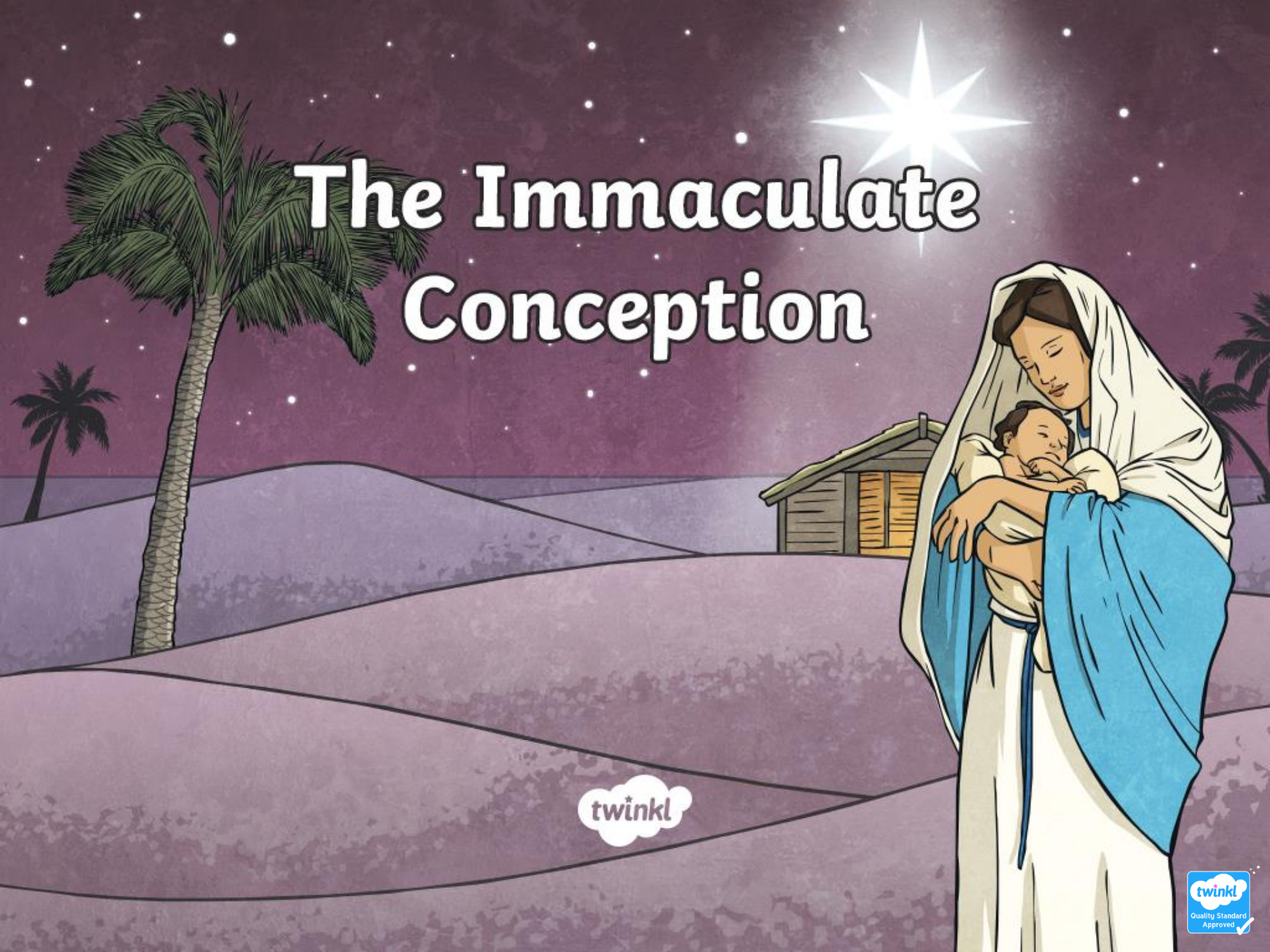


# The Immaculate Conception



# The Feast Day of the Immaculate Conception

For Catholics living all around the world, 8<sup>th</sup> December is a special feast day known as the Feast Day of the Immaculate Conception.

Many people mistakenly believe this commemorates the day when Mary miraculously conceived Jesus, however, it actually relates to **Mary**. Catholics believe that she was conceived without original sin in preparation for what was to come.





# Original Sin

Catholics believe that God planted a garden in Eden and placed Adam and Eve there to look after it. They were the first man and woman. Adam and Eve were told they could eat from any tree, except one. They both gave into temptation and ate fruit from the one tree they had been told not to eat from. Their wrongdoing deeply offended God and they were banished from the garden.



We are all children of our parents, therefore Catholics believe we inherit their sin. This sin is called original sin. Adam and Eve are known as the first parents and because of their actions, it is believed by some that babies are born into the world with original sin. Baptism is thought to be one way of cleansing the soul.



# The Blessed Virgin Mary



Photo courtesy of Nheyob (@Wikimedia commons) - granted under creative commons licence – attribution

Catholics believe that the Blessed Virgin Mary was given an amazing gift from God. She was conceived in the womb of her mother, Saint Anne, without original sin as she was to become the mother of Jesus, God's only son.

This great gift, which Mary was blessed with, is called the Immaculate Conception. She spent her whole existence in a perfect relationship with God.



# Celebrating the Feast Day of the Immaculate Conception

Some Catholics attend church services to celebrate this special day. Prayers are said and hymns may be sung.

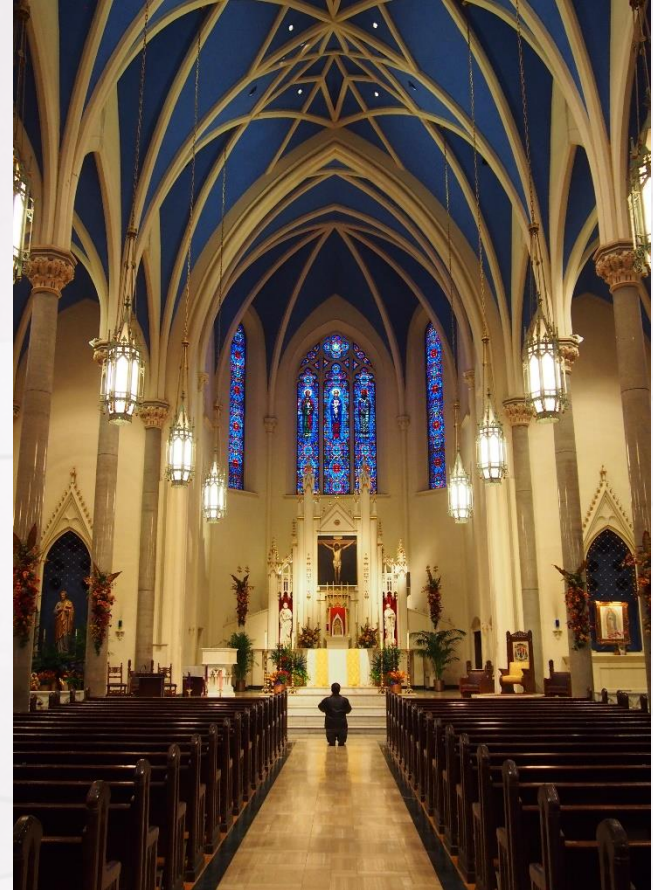


Photo courtesy of Nheyob (@Wikimedia commons) - granted under creative commons licence - attribution