FAITH @Home

21 DECEMBER 2025: YEAR A: 4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

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Celebrating and supporting faith, hope and love in the heart of the family!

"TO THE HEIGHTS" YOUTH EDITION ALSO AVAILABLE

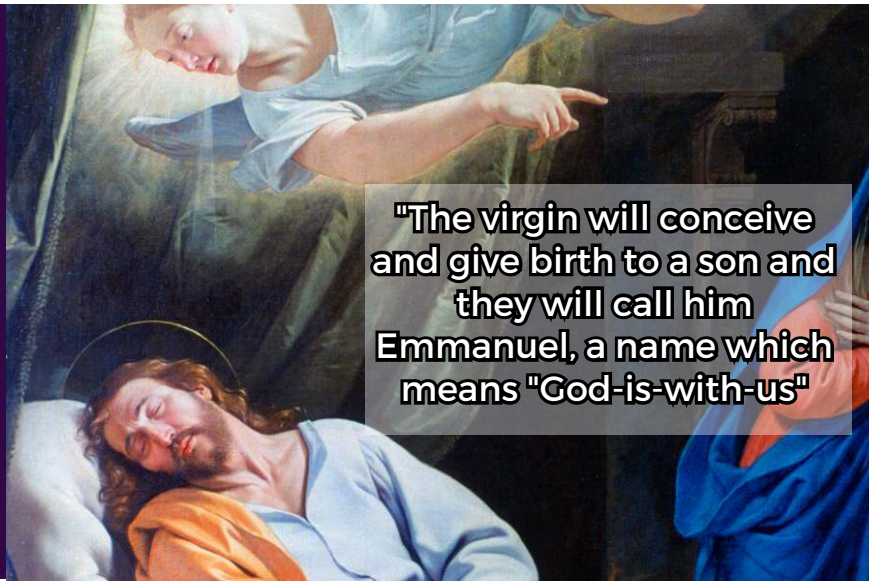
Sunday Mass Readings

First Reading:
Isaiah 7:10-14

Responsorial Psalm:
Psalm 23 (24): 1-6

Second Reading:
Romans 1:1-7

Gospel:
Matthew 1: 18-24



Philippe de Champaigne, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Hear

Grab your Bible and look up the Gospel reading. Don't have one? No worries, you can find this week's readings online HERE.

Reflect

- In the Gospel today we find ourselves with Joseph and the Angel Gabriel who is speaking to him in his dream.
- What is the Holy Spirit saying to you through this piece of Scripture? How do these words resonate with you personally?
- Have you ever had your well-made plans disrupted by the Lord? How have they worked out?
- Have you ever faced a problem you could see no solution to - but found consolation and guidance in prayer? Maybe you're in a situation like that now, and need to hear the voice of God directing you, as Gabriel directed Joseph. Ask St Joseph to intercede for your intention this week, as protector of the Holy Family.

Chat

In today's readings we hear about Joseph taking Mary as his wife, following a visit in his dream from the Angel Gabriel.

Discuss the following as a family:

- How do we know that we can trust someone e.g. like our parents to look after us?
- How do we know that we can trust God? How has he looked after us in the past?
- St Joseph is a great role model to show us how to trust in God. Even when he didn't understand what was happening, He knew that God was in control. Let's ask St Joseph this week to help us to trust more and more in God and His plan for our lives and our family.

Family Prayer

Dear Jesus, may the light of your love always shine in our hearts. As Christmas draws closer, we marvel at your great love for us. Let your love transform every aspect of our lives and touch everyone we encounter. Our hearts are open to you, Jesus. Amen.

www.dynamiccatholic.com

Family Challenge!

Did you know that Pope Francis had a great devotion to the "***Sleeping St Joseph***" and kepts a statue of him in his room? Look up this devotion - maybe this is something your family could adopt, and even get a statue or print an image of.

BE LIKE JOSEPH!

Finally, on this the Fourth Sunday of Advent, our Gospel Reading permits us to begin our contemplation of the mystery of the Incarnation we celebrate at Christmas: "Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about" (Matthew 1:18).

The Gospel of Matthew tells the story of the birth of Jesus from Joseph's perspective.

In the chapter to follow, Matthew tells of the visit from the Magi, the Holy Family's flight into Egypt, and Herod's massacre of the infants in Bethlehem. (The other stories which we associate with Christmas, the Annunciation, the Visitation, the angel and the shepherds, are found in the Gospel of Luke).

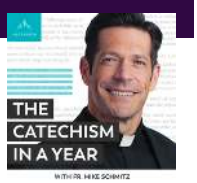
We must not gloss over too quickly the difficult circumstances described in today's Gospel. The way that Joseph and Mary face these circumstances tells us much about these holy people and their faith in God. Joseph and Mary are betrothed to be married. This is sometimes described as an engagement period, but it is more than that. Betrothal in first century Jewish culture was in fact the first part of the marriage contract. A breach of this contract was considered adultery. Mary is found to be with child. If adultery is proven, the punishment might be death. Joseph has rights under Mosaic law, but chooses to act discreetly in his plans to break the marriage contract, so as to protect Mary. Then God intervenes.

The message of the angel of the Lord given to Joseph in his dream tells us much about the child that Mary bears and his role in God's plan. He is conceived by the Holy Spirit. His name will be Jesus, which in the Hebrew means "Yahweh saves." He will be the fulfillment of the prophecy heard in today's first reading from Isaiah: ". . . The virgin shall be with child . . . and shall name him Emmanuel [God with us]."

Joseph does as the angel of the Lord directs. He takes Mary to be his wife and accepts the child in her womb as his own. Joseph and Mary are both cooperative with God's plan. They are both models for us of what it means to be faithful servants of God.

Adapted from ***Loyola Press Sunday Connection***

MAKE A PLAN FOR THE NEW YEAR! THE CATECHISM IN A YEAR



Ascension launched The Catechism in a Year (with Fr. Mike Schmitz) in 2023 giving Catholics an opportunit to read the entire Catechism of the Catholic Church in 365 days | Understand the essentials of the Catholic Faith and why they matter | See how Church teaching is rooted in Sacred Scripture | Absorb over 2,000 years of Sacred Tradition | Encounter God's plan of sheer goodness | Transform their relationship with the Church that Christ founded.

If you have ever wanted to understand what it means to be Catholic and allow those truths to shape your life—this podcast is for you!

CARLO'S CORNER

PRAY, LISTEN, ACT

Ever had plans that were so carefully thought out, so well prepared that you were sure you were in control and everything would work out the way you intended?

Life doesn't always work that way does it! Just ask St Joseph! He was betrothed to the beautiful, pure, good and holy virgin Mary. They were ready to start their life together. Then he found out she was expecting a child, and it wasn't his. Can you imagine the confusion, the pain and the whirlwind of emotions he must have felt? Yet Joseph was a good man, a godly man. God honoured his faithfulness and revealed to him in a dream that Mary's child was no ordinary child, but Emmanuel, God with us. She had conceived through the power of the Holy Spirit. I'm sure he still didn't understand fully what all that meant, who could? Joseph trusted God however, and he acted. We see this time and again with Joseph in the Gospel. He prays, he listens, he hears and he obeys. What a role model for all of us, especially when we're confused, or feel overwhelmed. Can you imagine what it was like knowing you were chosen to care for the Son of God, and God's mother? Talk about pressure!! Joseph listened and took the next good step, that's all he was asked to do. Trust and act, and leave the rest to God.

Let that be our motto in these final few days of Advent!

Having Joy in Uncertainty
(Fr Mike Schmitz)

Your Promises
(Elevation Worship)

To the Heights Youth Resource also available

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