

December 10 ADVENT 2017

JOSEPH OF BETHLEHEM: MERCY

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

SCRIPTURE Matthew 1:1-25



18 Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. **19** Her husband **Joseph**, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. **20** But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. **21** She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." **22** All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: **23** "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." **24** When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, **25** but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

Joseph of Bethlehem:

The Voice of Mercy

Joseph's hometown of Bethlehem (also King David's hometown) literally means "**House of Bread**." The town rests in the shadow of a huge monument (the Herodium) built by Herod as a testament to his great "might." But it is not a King or a Ruler that is to be the earthly father of Jesus, but rather a man who has great mercy when faced with a pregnant fiancé. He shows ultimate hospitality to Mary and to God's plan, just as Jesus will show mercy as he breaks bread with the least later in his ministry.

How are we to show such mercy and hospitality along the journey of life?

When has the voice of mercy fallen upon you?

When have you failed to be the voice of mercy?

Have you had a dream that made a difference in your life?

How are our "day dreams" different from night dreams?

