



# EVENING PRAYER DEVOTIONAL

THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2020

## THE FEAST OF ST. JOSEPH

*Readings: Psalm 46; Ephesians 1:15-end; Matthew 1:18-26*

O God, who from the family of your servant David raised up Joseph to be the guardian of your incarnate Son and the husband of his virgin mother: Give us grace to imitate his uprightness of life and his obedience to your commands; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**



Full confession; I am a bit jaded when it comes to this feast day because I share the name of the man called to be the guardian of the incarnate Son. Can you imagine playing catch with the eternal incarnate Son? I couldn't imagine being the "father" of Jesus.

Matthew accounts Joseph to be a just man and not wanting Mary to be put to shame when he found out she was pregnant (and he was not the father!). However, an angel of the Lord disrupts his plans and reveals God's redemptive purposes with this unusual pregnancy. Wouldn't it be so beneficial for God to stop and reveal His redemptive purposes in the midst of our own hardship and awkward situations? This, of course, was a unique moment in time because God revealed to Joseph that the child would be the Messiah. What's important about this revelation is His Name.

Notice the angel declares two names to Joseph; Jesus and Immanuel. Names matter a great deal in the Scriptures for they often reveal what God is doing or is going to do. I couldn't imagine the pressure Joseph felt raising the child whose name means, the "Lord saves" and hearing that somehow this child will be the one who saves people from their sins. But the angel lays all the cards on the table naming the child Immanuel, which means "God with us." What is Matthew trying to tell us about Jesus? Jesus is truly God. But wait, there's more. Jesus is the God with us. But wait, there's more. Jesus is the God with us who will save us from our sins.

The same God who is with us, is the same God who saves us, and is the same God who is for us. Joseph submits to the call of raising up the child who will save him from his sins. What a calling! Consider the Lord's calling in your ordinary lives; husbands, wives, fathers, mothers, friends, neighbors, teachers, lawyers, students, doctors/nurses. In this season of social distancing, how might your callings make known the God who is with us, the God who saves us, and the God who is for us?

Baptized child of the Triune God, rest easy upon your pillows tonight. Amen.

- Fr. Joe