

Year A - Fourth Sunday of Advent

Matthew 1:18-24

*Jesus was born of Mary, the betrothed of Joseph,
a son of David.*



This is how Jesus Christ was born.

A young woman named Mary was engaged
to Joseph from King David's family.

But before they were married,
she learned that she was going to have a baby by God's Holy Spirit.
Joseph was a good man and did not want to embarrass Mary
in front of everyone.

So he decided to quietly call off the wedding.

While Joseph was thinking about this,
an angel from the Lord came to him in a dream.

The angel said, "Joseph, the baby that Mary will have
is from the Holy Spirit.

Go ahead and marry her.

Then after her baby is born, name him Jesus,
because he will save his people from their sins."

So God's promise came true, just as the prophet had said,
"A virgin will have a baby boy,
and he will be called Immanuel,"
which means "God is with us."

After Joseph woke up, he and Mary were soon married,
just as the Lord's angel had told him to do.



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It wasn't what he expected!

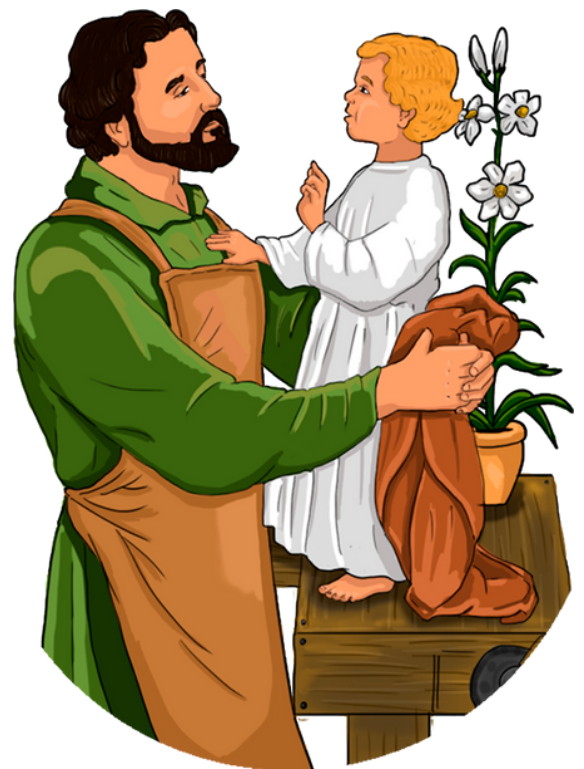


Introduction

When Joseph first heard about Mary's pregnancy, he assumed that she had been unfaithful. But it was in a dream that an angel of God spoke to Joseph and explained to him that Mary was carrying God's own son who would save all the people of the world!

Message

- What are we expecting this Christmas. Are there gifts you are expecting? Are you expecting to do certain things, go certain places?
- What do you expect when you come along to Church? What do you expect to do here and what do you expect to happen?
- Sometimes in our lives, God does the unexpected. And although we might have plans and expectations God might have something else planned for us.
- So when things don't always go to plan, or when things have to change last minute. Keep your eyes open, because God might be making room in your life to do something unexpected!



Discussion Questions

- What are you expecting to happen at Christmas?
- Can you think of a time when things haven't gone to plan but worked out better?
- Can you see God at work in that?