

chosen to be the privileged custodians of this ultimate transformation of the world from end to end, summarised by the words “salvation from sins.”

But this shock should also be ours. Why? Like Joseph, like Mary, we are the privileged custodian in the present day of this same Kingdom, this same act of God through which

he is fulfilling his deeply good purpose for the world. We too, each and every one of us, bear the mystery of the name of Jesus within you. Say “yes” to it like Mary. Play your part like Joseph.

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We Respond ...

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (or a hymn)

Drop down dew from above, you heavens, and let the clouds rain down the Just One; let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 23)

ANTIPHON: Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory.

RESPONSE (R): Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory.

LECTOR: The Lord's is the earth and its fullness, the world and all its peoples. It is he who set it on the seas; on the waters he made it firm. **R.**

LECTOR: Who shall climb the mountain of the Lord? Who shall stand in his holy place? The man with clean hands and pure heart, who desires not worthless things. **R.**

LECTOR: He shall receive blessings from the Lord and reward from the God who saves him. Such are the men who seek him, seek the face of the God of Jacob. **R.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Alleluia, alleluia! A virgin will give birth to a son; his name will be Emmanuel: God is with us. Alleluia!

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (or a hymn) Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son; and his name will be called Emmanuel.

TODAY'S READINGS Isaiah 7:10-14; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-24

NEXT WEEK (Holy Family, Year A) Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14; Psalm 127; Colossians 3:12-21; Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23

Let's Figure out Families Together

All families have issues and are dysfunctional to some extent. A new podcast series, *Figuring out Families*, looks at the issues facing families today. Produced by Majellan Media, experts in a variety of fields are interviewed about the specific issues and what type of assistance is available to wounded families. Some of those interviewed to date include Denis Fitzgerald from Catholic Social Services, Robyn Miller from Mackillop Family Services and Juli Sharpe from Genesis Pregnancy Support. Those podcasts and others are now available at www.majellan.media



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“Name him Jesus,” commanded the angel. Why? Unlike Mary at the Annunciation, Joseph in his dream did not have any time to pose questions to the angel. The answer came too quickly, “Name him Jesus *because* he will save his people from their sins.” Joseph’s dream, convincing him that Mary’s pregnancy was a divine act, is like a summary version of Mary’s encounter with the angel Gabriel.

The angel tells him, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid” to wed your betrothed. The Holy Spirit did this; God is doing something here. He is bringing forth a son through her, “Jesus,” who “will save his people from their sins.” And you have a part to play.

To understand Joseph’s dream, we have to remember what Gabriel said to Mary at the Annunciation. It is a massive announcement: “Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over

the house of Jacob forever, and of his Kingdom there will be no end.”

All this is precisely encapsulated in his name, “Jesus.” He will be “great.” How great? He will be given the great royal title of “Son of the Most High”: see, he is the heir to David’s throne. He will fulfill the ancient promises God made to David: see, he will “rule over the house of Jacob forever.”

His Kingdom will be endless! A just ruler over Israel will lead to justice, peace and prosperity, not only for Israel but also for the entire world. Life lived without fear, without suffering, without death. Blessing upon blessing. Divine presence. God’s goodness unquestionably evident in every facet of life. This is human life as it has always been intended to be! It is all true and all coming true! Finally, here and now! God is on the move!

That is what it means to “save his people from their sins.” Jesus is the name that saves. It is the human name of God. To Mary and Joseph, it must have been a shock that they were