

St. Philip the Apostle

Roman Catholic Church



Thursday, September 8, 2022

-- Thursday of the Twenty-Third Week in Ordinary Time

-- Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

First Reading: Micah 5:1-4

The Lord says: You, Bethlehem-Ephrathah, too small to be among the clans of Judah, From you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel; Whose origin is from of old, from ancient times. (Therefore the Lord will give them up, until the time when she who is to give birth has borne, And the rest of his brethren shall return to the children of Israel.) He shall stand firm and shepherd his flock by the strength of the Lord, in the majestic name of the Lord, his God; And they shall remain, for now his greatness shall reach to the ends of the earth; he shall be peace.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 13:6

With delight I rejoice in the Lord.

Though I trusted in your mercy,
let my heart rejoice in your salvation. *R/.*

Let me sing of the Lord, "He has been good to me." *R/.*

Gospel: Matthew 1:1-16, 18-23

The Book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

Abraham became the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers. Judah became the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar. Perez became the father of Hezron, Hezron the father of Ram, Ram the father of Amminadab. Amminadab became the father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father of Salmon, Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab. Boaz became the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth. Obed became the father of Jesse, Jesse the father of David the king.

David became the father of Solomon, whose mother had been the wife of Uriah. Solomon became the father of Rehoboam, Rehoboam the father of Abijah, Abijah the father of Asaph. Asaph became the father of Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, Joram the father of Uzziah. Uzziah became the father of Jotham, Jotham the father of Ahaz, Ahaz the father of Hezekiah. Hezekiah became the father of Manasseh, Manasseh the father of Amos, Amos the father of Josiah. Josiah became the father of Jechoniah and his brothers at the time of the Babylonian exile.

After the Babylonian exile, Jechoniah became the father of Shealtiel, Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, Zerubbabel the father of Abiud. Abiud became the father of Eliakim, Eliakim the father of Azor, Azor the father of Zadok. Zadok became the father of Achim, Achim the father of Eliud, Eliud

the father of Eleazar. Eleazar became the father of Matthan, Matthan the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary. Of her was born Jesus who is called the Christ.

Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the Holy Spirit. Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly. Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet:

Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means "God is with us."

Reflection

Do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. (Matthew 1:20)

Have you ever had the experience of someone quietly (or not so quietly) distancing himself from you because of your faith? Perhaps an adult child says you are "too radical," or a neighbor questions your sincerity, or a friend accuses you of being too generous to the poor. Whether by our closest family or friends or by our acquaintances, being snubbed or misunderstood can sting.

The Virgin Mary, whose birth we celebrate today, was on the verge of being abandoned by her husband and shunned by her community because of her yes to God. Joseph also knew he was taking a great risk when he stayed with Mary in spite of her unexpected pregnancy.

What makes their decisions even more remarkable is that Mary and Joseph would have known about figures from the Hebrew Scriptures who also faced opposition for their decision to follow God's plan. They would have recalled how Moses faced rebellion when he was trying to lead his people into the Promised Land. Or how David had to escape King Saul, who was so jealous of David that he tried to kill him.

Mary and Joseph would have also known that obeying God does not guarantee a problem-free life. In fact, it could open them up to rejection and ridicule. Yet they were willing to follow him because what they were receiving was so much greater than the risk at hand. The promise of salvation for all mankind was worth the hardships they would face. And so they accepted his will, with its high points and its low points, and held fast to him through it all.

When you face misunderstanding or even hostility because of your faith, remember Mary and Joseph and the courage it took for them to yield to God's plan for them. Remember that your reward will be much greater than any opposition you might face, starting with the peace that comes from being in the plan and will of God.

Hail Mary, full of grace, pray for me to say yes to God's plan for me.

An Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus,
I believe that You
are present in the Most Holy Sacrament
I love You above all things,
and I desire to receive You into my soul.
Since I cannot at this moment

receive You sacramentally,
come at least spiritually into my heart.
I embrace You as if You were already there
and unite myself wholly to You.
Never permit me to be separated from You.
Amen.

Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel

St. Michael the Archangel,
defend us in battle.
Be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the Devil.
May God rebuke him, we humbly pray,
and do thou,
O Prince of the heavenly hosts,
by the power of God,
thrust into hell Satan,
and all the evil spirits,
who prowl about the world
seeking the ruin of souls.
Amen.