

## AWAY IN A MANGER: JOSEPH

December 15, 2019 OGMC

Matthew 1:18-25 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

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.

Today we observe Joseph, Mary's husband, and Jesus' earthly father.

--Joseph/Mary betrothed, committed to be married, but not living together, 1-2 yr. time of preparation

--When Mary became pregnant, not by Joseph, according to his culture, he could have ended their agreement, and left her in disgrace.

--In a dream, an angel told him to accept Mary, that this was God's divine plan, so he accepted her and baby, a very uncommon expression of God's grace.

JOSEPH IS AN EXAMPLE OF:

### 1. A STRONG FAITH

--He knew the OT prophecy re: a virgin would conceive, and he believed the words of the angel, and was willing to follow thru in staying with Mary, enduring the criticism with her, supporting her, etc.

### 2. GREAT ACCEPTANCE AND LOVE FOR MARY AND JESUS, JUST AS IF HE WAS HIS OWN SON

--His grace and acceptance of Mary, when his culture told him to divorce her, disown her, or worse

--All Jewish males were to be circumcised at 8 days old, welcoming them into Jewish tradition

--The first born males were 'consecrated' at 31 days old, Luke 2:21-24. Joseph had major role in both these ceremonies, which officially welcomed Jesus into the Jewish tradition and into Joseph's family

### 3. RESPONSIBLE HUSBAND AND FATHER Matthew 2:13-23

--Joseph set aside his own career/business, to take Mary and Jesus to Egypt to protect them, and he cared for them thru all the challenges of being migrants, living in foreign land/culture, etc.; then returning to Nazareth when Jesus was likely 4-6 years old. Fitting back into their home culture was not easy, for his life was now radically different, as was his community also.