

## 4th Sunday of Advent 2022 Gospel and Reflection

Gospel - Matthew 1:18-24

They will call him Emmanuel

This is how Jesus the Messiah was born. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit. Joseph, her fiancé, was a good man and did not want to disgrace her publicly, so he decided to break the engagement quietly.

As he considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. "Joseph, son of David," the angel said, "do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

All of this occurred to fulfil the Lord's message through the prophet:

*"Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son, and they will call him Emmanuel, which means 'God is with us.'"*

When Joseph woke up, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded and took Mary as his wife.

*Do not be afraid. Open wide the doors to Christ. John Paul II*

### Discussion Points

1. Mary and Joseph were called to live differently. What are you being called to do differently?
2. Mary and Joseph risked the ridicule of family, friends and society. When have you risked the ridicule of others?
3. Many see 'living simply' as an alternative lifestyle. How do you see others who embrace a simple or alternative lifestyle?
4. Mary and Joseph's openness to God's teaches us something. What do you feel those 'living simply' have to teach you?
5. How might the invitation to 'live simply' change or influence your celebration of Christmas?

### Prayer

*Lord, help us to give time to being quiet and to listen to your still, small voice. May we discern your promptings and be courageous and unafraid to carry them out.*