

The Star: A Journey of Love

Matthew 1:18-24

This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

But after he had considered 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 home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).

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

L: The Word of God for the People of God.

P: Thanks be to God.

Welcome to the second Sunday of Advent.

We are on a spiritual journey following the Star to Christmas. Along the way we are making stops at hope, love, joy, and peace.

Today’s stop is love.

1. Love from the Start

“For he [God the Father] chose us in him [God the Son] before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.” (Ephesians 1:4–6)

2. Love is Enough

“And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.” (Ephesians 3:17–19)

“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:38–39)

3. Love Overflows

1 John 4:7-19:

- **God is love, and He sent His Son as a sacrifice for us. This was Jesus, God's love from the start and His gift to each of us.**
- **We can know and rely on God's love—God's love is enough for us today, tomorrow, for always.**
- **We love because God first loved us. God's love overflows within and through us to others.**