

Advent Calendar: Day 7

The reflections for this week are centered around the readings for this Sunday's texts
Jeremiah 33:12-16, Romans 13:8-12, Matthew 1:18-25

Matthew 1:25

When Joseph awoke from sleep,
he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife,
but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

Next Sunday, we get to hear about Joseph, the man who accepted Jesus as his Son. Mary traditionally gets the spotlight in most Advent reflections, but Joseph's significance should be no less noted. Apparently, despite God's specific choice of Mary as Jesus' mother and whatever ways He might have designed to directly direct Jesus' developmental years, God also was determined to provide Jesus with an earthly father. This provision from God should solidify and sanctify our notions concerning the importance of fatherhood. Tragically however, 1/4 to 1/3 of children live in fatherless homes. These children account for 90% of homeless/runaway children, 85% of the youth in prison, 71% of high school dropouts, 85% of children with behavior disorders, 63% of youth suicides, and... the troubling statistic continue. If a good and present father was important for Jesus' upbringing, we should never discount it's critical necessity in the upbringing of any child.

Fathers, recognize the holy and essential role God has given you. Pray that fathers may be present in every way, to support, protect, provide, direct, serve, and love their families. Some of you may even find ways to provide healthy fatherly support to those children who have been abandoned. Think of a man who has blessed you as a father figure and thank God for the gift of their presence in your life. Consider sending them a note or small gift this Christmas with a note of gratitude attached.