

A leap of faith...

King Ahaz reigned in the eighth century before Christ. In order not to offend, he refused to ask the Lord for a sign. Instead he received a promise: *Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel, meaning God is with us...* This Christ Child would be the true *Emmanuel*, a sign that *God is (already) with his people*. Mary, Christ's mother, would be the *young woman* of the promise.



With only a few days before Christmas, it goes without saying that we would celebrate Mary. This year, with the Gospels of St. Matthew, our thoughts also turn to Joseph. Just as King Ahaz did not want to put God to the test, Joseph did not want to compromise his fiancée. God asked him to have faith and welcome Mary and the Christ Child.

Salvation history is always interesting. It records that both King Ahaz and Joseph made significant and historical choices. The passages teach us about our *God with us*: God who would disturb us, take initiatives, and upset what was considered the normal order. Isaiah's words to King Ahaz brought hope to Israel. Joseph understood his mission.

The story of humanity's salvation is based on a leap of faith and confidence which acknowledges that love and hope are its foundations. Saint Paul explained this in his letter to the communities in Rome. King Ahaz, in the past, and Saint Paul, like Joseph and Mary, followed their callings. They were the bearers of the *Good News*, which proclaim with certainty that *God is with us*.

This affirmation underwent a transformation when *God is with us* became *I am with you*, the promise that Jesus made to his Apostles when he sent them on their missions into the world. It's also the promise that God made to Moses during his mission to free the Hebrew slaves in Egypt and the one made to King Ahaz through the words of Isaiah, his prophet.

Christ's statement, *I am with you*, which is recorded in St. Matthew's Gospel, makes the connections begin by the announcement to Joseph when the Angel asked him to take Mary as his wife and the Child to be born into his home. The divine messenger even gave the Child a name: Jesus, *Yeshua*, a beautiful Hebrew name which means *God saves*. Jesus would be *Emmanuel*, *God is with us*, the One through whom the Lord *would save* his people.

Saint Matthew's Gospel clearly illustrates the meaning of Christmas.

Father Jacques Houle, c.s.v.
Translated by Honore Kerwin Borrelli

HOLY FAMILY PARISH
7355 Lajeunesse Street, Montreal, QC H2R 2H6
Tel: 514-272-1056/Fax: 514-272-2959
Father John Baxter

MASS INTENTIONS FOR DECEMBER 18, 2016

Please pray for:

Lea Guilbeault & Ferruccio Berardo
Carmela Galardo
Liliane Hutchingame
Serge Dugas
Fernand Leclerc
Dane Wray
Stella Westphal
Glenn Doyle
Serge Dugas
Josefa Fitz
John Gregory
Mathias Kozina
Tonie (Antoinette) Moscato
Phillip Elliott
Gladys Jean Batten
Mel Pompura

Requested by:

Family
Family
Family
Friends of Holy Family
Friends of Holy Family
Fr. Mike Shaw
Fr. Mike Shaw
Fr. Mike Shaw
Family
Family
Fr. Mike Shaw
Family
Di Tata Family
Susan & Family
Fr. Mike Shaw
Family

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Christmas and New Year's Mass Schedule:

Christmas Eve: Saturday, December 24th at 8:00 pm
Christmas Day: Sunday, December 25th at 10:30 am
New Year's Eve: NO MASS
Sunday Mass: Sunday, January 1st at 10:30 am

Please visit our new and improved web site at: <http://www.holyfamilyparishmtl.com>

Feel free to provide your comments / suggestions / or add to Joe Piazza at jpiazza@live.ca
If you wish to add you email address to Holy Family's address list, please send it to jpiazza@live.ca

For those wishing to have a mass said for loved one or a friend, please see Sharon Murphy after mass.

Last Sunday's collection was \$2660. Thank you!

Why is Christmas just like another day at the office?

You end up doing all the work and the fat guy in the suit gets all the credit.

