

But what about Joseph? That was another matter, he planned to disappear out of Miriam's life but an angel came to him at night and told him not to be afraid to take Miriam as his wife as that which would be born of her was the direct work of God and that they should call the boy Jesus. Joseph was relieved and delighted and rushed to tell Miriam. Anna and Joachim packed the two of them off to Elizabeth and Zachariah saying "Zachariah will marry the two of you in the synagogue whilst you are there". And that is what happened on the first advent or coming of Christ. **-Kevin Hanrahan**

Entrance antiphon: O people of Sion, behold, the Lord will come to save the nations, and the Lord will make the glory of his voice heard in the joy of your heart.

First Reading: Isaiah 40 1-5, 9-11

Responsorial Psalm: 84 Response: Let us see, O Lord, your mercy and give us your saving help.

Second Reading: 2 Peter 3: 8-14

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight, and all mankind shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia!

Gospel: Mark 1: 1-8

Memorial Acclamation: Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.

Communion Antiphon: Jerusalem, arise and stand upon the heights, and behold the joy which comes to you from God.

"Advent's intention is to awaken the most profound and basic emotional memory within us, namely, the memory of the God who became a child. This is a healing memory; it brings hope. The purpose of the Church's year is continually to rehearse her great history of memories, to awaken the heart's memory so that it can discern the star of hope". Pope Benedict XVI



Second Sunday of Advent, Cycle B, 2023 Weekly

**Reflection: *THOUGHTS ON THE
FIRST ADVENT OR COMING OF***

CHRIST: "Josef", my mother said to me, "what is eating you up, what is worrying you"? I just didn't want to say so I slunk away without

answering. The truth is that I had seen my fiancée Miriam, daughter of Joachim and Anna. Our wedding was planned for her fifteenth birthday which would be in four months time but when I saw her she was strange and silent. I asked her what was her trouble but she did not answer, thinking she was worried and in need of my care, I put my arms around her and immediately I noticed that she was pregnant. I was shocked and ran away with tears in my eyes. I had no option but to break off the engagement quietly so as to embarrass her the least.

Miriam had her own worries, she was indeed pregnant but by the Holy Spirit of God. That was well and good but what would the neighbours say and more importantly what would her mum and dad say? How would she explain her condition to them? And what would Josef say? He was a decent honest and good Jewish boy and they were Deeply in love and looking forward to the wedding day.

Miriam decided to tell her mum and dad and said "An angel came to me and told me that I would become pregnant by the Holy Spirit of God". She then added that the angel also told her that her cousin Elizabeth was pregnant and would give birth to a son. Joachim and Anna were sceptical about the whole thing and feared for Miriam's health. "Look said Joachim, Miriam had said that Elizabeth was expecting as well so we can put the whole story to the test by sending her away to Elizabeth. If she agrees we will know that she is telling us the truth, if she says no, we have another answer". When they told Miriam that she was to go to Elizabeth she was delighted and so they knew that they could believe her.