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A Good News Story

An Angel Comes to Joseph in a Dream

Catholic News Service

Joseph was a very devout and righteous man who always obeyed God's laws. He worked as a carpenter and was not very wealthy, but he did come from a very famous family.

King David, the shepherd boy whom God made king of the Israelites during Old Testament times, was one of Joseph's relatives.

Joseph was betrothed to a woman, a virgin named Mary. "Betrothed" means that Joseph and Mary were married, but they were not yet living together as husband and wife in the same house.

One day, Joseph learned that Mary was going to have a baby.

He did not realize that the angel Gabriel had told Mary that the Holy Spirit would come upon her and that "you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

Joseph decided that, according



Q&A

What famous person was Joseph related to?

To whom was Joseph betrothed?

Read more in Matthew 1

to the law, he should no longer be married to Mary. He also did not want to get Mary in any trouble or cause her to be shamed or harmed, so he decided that he would divorce her without making a big deal about it.

Then, one night, Joseph had a dream. An angel of God came to him and spoke:

"Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home," the angel said. "For it is through the Holy Spirit

that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

What the angel said to Joseph fulfilled a prophecy that God, through one of his prophets, had revealed to his people in the Old Testament: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel." Emmanuel means "God is with us."

When Joseph woke up, he did exactly as the angel had told him to do. He did not divorce Mary, but instead took her into his home and waited for Jesus to be born.

God Speaks to Joseph

There were several times when God spoke to Joseph, the earthly father of Jesus, through dreams. Three of those dreams were meant to help protect the newborn Messiah from harm.

Just before Jesus was born, Joseph took Mary to his family's home city, Bethlehem, the city of David, to be counted in a census. Mary gave birth to Jesus there,

and the new parents were visited by the Magi, who had followed a star to where Jesus had been born.

Not long after the Magi left, Joseph had a dream. An angel warned him that King Herod wanted to kill Jesus and told him to flee to Egypt with Mary and the baby. After the Holy Family left for Egypt in the night, Herod ordered all male children up to 2 years old who lived in or around Bethlehem

to be killed.

After Herod died, Joseph had another dream in which an angel said, "Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead."

Joseph did so, but he was warned in another dream not to return to Judea, because it might not be safe. Instead, Joseph brought his family to Galilee to live in Nazareth.

Bible Matching

Below are some events surrounding the early life of Jesus. Label them 1-5 in the order in which they happened. Most of the events can be found in Luke 2, except for C, which can be found in Matthew 2:10-11.

- ___ A) Joseph and Mary lose Jesus after a festival.
- ___ B) Jesus is born in Bethlehem.
- ___ C) The Magi visit Jesus and give him gifts.
- ___ D) Jesus is presented at the temple.
- ___ E) Joseph and Mary name their baby Jesus.

Color the picture and tell the story in your own words.
