

Today we celebrate the Solemnity of Saint Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This is one of two days in the liturgical calendar commemorating St. Joseph. And, of course, you now know everything about St. Joseph because you attended the 3:00 pm presentation.

March 19 is one of those days that will always be securely situated in the middle of Lent. The latest date for Ash Wednesday is March 5; and the earliest date for Easter Sunday is March 22. So, no matter when Lent begins or ends, St. Joseph's feast day always falls during Lent.

And, so, right here in the middle of Lent, we get a Solemnity. A liturgical day where we sing the Gloria and recite the Creed. A brief respite of celebration amidst the penances of the season.

There are two Gospels appointed for today - and of course, we only read one. Nonetheless, in St. Matthew's Gospel, we hear

*you are to name him Jesus,  
because he will save his people from their sins*

Which sounds a bit disconnected, unless you pry into the Hebrew meaning of the Name. Just like "David" means "beloved," and "Nathan" means "gift" in Hebrew, "Jesus" means "rescuer" or "deliverer" or "savior."

Which then gives a better meaning to Matthew's line when we consider that it says:

*you are to name him [rescuer, deliverer, savior],  
because he will save his people from their sins*

Of course, couched within the spirit of this age is the premise that we are - each of us individually - whole and entire, completely self-sufficient. Our depleted attention spans, formed by so much television that we almost expect everything to work out in the 22 minutes that is worked in between commercials ... almost demand instant answers and instant gratification.

Yet if Jesus is to save us from our sins ... if Jesus is to be our rescuer ... our deliverer ... our savior ... then we need to recognize that we didn't get here in less than 22 minutes. And we're going to have to give him more time to save, deliver, and rescue us ... from our sins ... and from ourselves.

As we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, let us pray that we might persevere in our Lenten journey ... and in our Lenten practices ... so that we might become more convinced of our personal need for a rescuer ... a deliverer ... a redeemer ... a savior. In whatever way that needs to work within our own situation ... let us rely more and more on God ... in the person of Jesus Christ ... to save us ... from our selves ... and from our sins.