

Salvation starts three trimesters ahead of December. Christmas—and forgiveness—begins already in March.

And it includes a gestating baby and an adoptive father!

The week that culminates in the Festival of the Annunciation (March 25) kicks off with the Feast of St. Joseph (March 19).

So the Word became flesh (John 1:14) and God with us (Matthew 1:23) in a surprise pregnancy.



**The Annunciation
and St. Joseph,
Guardian of Our Lord**

The Gospel of Jesus Christ commences with this kind of crisis and proves that unplanned doesn't always indicate only disaster.

The Mother of our Lord may have been unmarried, but He did not leave her to carry the Child alone.

Elizabeth and Bethlehem also intervened and assisted.

But God gave Joseph to accompany her all along because His grace is about always abiding nearby.

Her betrothed, of course, had his own anxieties.
Childbearing is a serious honor and responsibility.
And even this saint did not act with entire innocence.
His panic concocted a myopic maneuver to get them
out of trouble.

The Good Lord, though, appointed
this one and not another to protect
and provide for both mother and
child before birth as well as after.

The otherwise obscure ancient
tradesman from nowhere Nazareth
recognized how men have a pivotal
vocation in bringing forth children
and bringing them up.

He put entire trust upon the
solemn promise that the
Little One's life embodied.

So, Scripture pronounced him for
posterity a righteous man.

From the Blessed Virgin and her bridegroom,
unsuspecting Mary and unassuming Joseph,
Jesus Himself first learned humble servanthood.
The resulting sacrifice forgave their
insufficiencies and everyone else's.

Heaven remembers them
immortal as encouragement and
invitation for us to receive every
neighbor as gift and privilege,
no matter what they have or lack,
where they come from
or how they got here.

Sanctity of life means miracles
we'd never have imagined.

Thanks be to God He still does it like Mary and Joseph!



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