

## A Letter from Fr. Patrick Kizza

December 21, 2025

As Christmas draws near, today's Gospel (Matthew 1:18–24) invites us to look not only at the humble birth of Jesus but also at the quiet strength of **Saint Joseph**, the man chosen to guard the Savior and His Mother. Matthew describes Joseph as a “righteous man”—a man of faith, mercy, and deep obedience. When he discovers that Mary is with child “through the Holy Spirit,” Joseph faces a situation he does not understand. Yet even in confusion, he chooses compassion: “*unwilling to expose her to shame,*” he resolves to act with gentleness.

It is in this moment of uncertainty that God enters Joseph's life in a new way. The angel tells him: “*Do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home... she will bear a son... Emmanuel, God-with-us.*” Joseph awakens and does what God asks—no hesitation, no complaint. As Pope Benedict XVI beautifully wrote, “Joseph teaches us that faith in God includes believing that He can work even through our fears, frailties, and weaknesses.” Joseph's yes allows God's plan of salvation to unfold.

Early Christian writers saw Joseph as a model for all believers. St. Bernard of Clairvaux wrote, “Joseph was chosen by God to be the guardian of the mysteries of heaven.” This quiet man was entrusted with the greatest mystery ever revealed: the Word made flesh. And he received this gift not through power, but through obedience and humility.

The coming of Jesus—Emmanuel—means that God is not distant. As St. Athanasius said, “He became what we are that He might make us what He is.” Jesus enters our world to redeem, transform, and dwell with us. The Child born in Bethlehem desires to be born also in our hearts, families, workplaces, communities, and world.

As we prepare for Christmas next week, the Gospel calls us to imitate Joseph by creating space for Christ in our lives. As we decorate our homes with lights and colors; let us also decorate our hearts with forgiveness, patience, charity, and prayer so that Jesus may truly find a home within us. When we reach out to estranged relatives, comfort a neighbor, or pray with our families, we become like Joseph, carrying Christ into the world.

May the newborn Jesus bring peace where there is tension, hope where there is discouragement, and light where there is darkness.

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of the Savior, I encourage you: Reach out to family and friends, wish them a Merry Christmas, forgive old hurts, and share the joy of Emmanuel—God with us.

I wish each of you a **Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year**. May Christ be born anew in your hearts and remain with you always.