

Third Saturday of Advent

December 22nd, 2007

“‘Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,’ which means ‘God is with us.’ When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took Mary as his wife.”

(Matthew 1:23-24)

Some people remember all their dreams and some can't recall any. Joseph remembered his dreams, and Mary was very grateful that he did. In this reading from Matthew, Joseph receives word from God that the baby that Mary is carrying is blessed. The dream brings about a change of heart and a change of plans. This is not the only occasion when Joseph has dreams that influence his decisions in life. The flight into Egypt and the return to Nazareth were influenced by Joseph's dreams. It seems that God realized that the best way to get Joseph's attention was when he slept.

How is God with us, today? We don't hear very much about dreams anymore, but they were an essential means of revelation not only for Joseph but also for many other biblical personalities. Could it be that we are missing opportunities for God to be with us because we don't listen to our dreams?

God is with us when we meditate on Scripture too. The Bible never ceases to offer inspiration. Every time we read a passage it can have new meaning for us and we find another facet of the face of God. In our lifetime we will never plumb the depths of scripture.

Emmanuel is also found in our neighbor. Sometimes seeing God in the person next to us may be the most difficult of tasks but we are urged by Jesus to keep trying. Each person is a child of God who offers a glimpse of the Holy One. There are Good Shepherds amongst us as well as images of the creator. There are the faces of the Suffering Servant and the smiling Jesus as well. See God with us!

God is with us in creation as well. Every created aspect of our universe sings the praises of the great Maker of all. There is so much creation around us that we miss most of it. Creation expresses that God is always coming and always new.

Today be conscious of the many ways that God is present in just this one day. How can we not be amazed!

Reflection Questions

- 1.) What dream has God planted in my heart?*
- 2.) What am I doing to realize it?*

Prayer: Emmanuel help me to be alert to the many movements of Your spirit in the world around me and within me.