

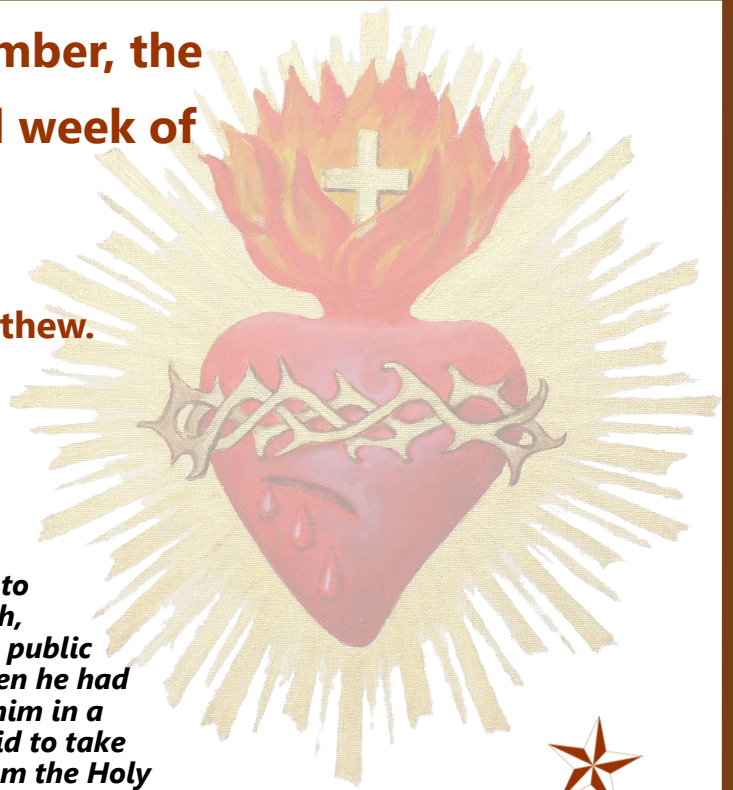
Today is Wednesday the 8 September, the Birthday of Our Lady, in the 23rd week of Ordinary time.



Today's reading is from the Gospel of Matthew.

Matthew 1:18-23

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.' All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: 'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel', which means, 'God is with us.'



The Gospel of the Lord... Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ .

It might be a bit jarring hearing this passage outside of the Christmas season! But as we celebrate the birthday of Our Lady today, we can take time to simply imagine Mary and Joseph as an ordinary, engaged couple facing an uncomfortable and astonishing situation... Picture Mary and Joseph now, newly betrothed, what most strikes you about them?

We hear that during their engagement, Mary is found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. that Mary is the one chosen to bear the Son of God. This would have been quite a life adjustment! Have you ever experienced the Holy Spirit's changing of your plans? What was it like to be led in that way?



As you hear the passage read again, what stays with you from the scene as it unfolds before you?

As we end this time of prayer, you might like to stay with Mary for a little while...perhaps you would like to give thanks for her obedience and example... or you might like to talk to God about how Mary and Joseph's trust and obedience have impacted your life.

Let us pray.... +

Lord,
I pray your blessing
on all the young people
you have entrusted to my care.
As they sleep, Lord,
may they be refreshed for tomorrow,
healed of hurts,
soothed from fears,
and secure in the wealth of your love.
Amen.



Saint John Baptist de La Salle

