



By Msgr. Robert Aucoin

Saint Joseph, spouse of Mary, foster father of Jesus - what a tremendous role he played in the history of salvation, but how often he is forgotten.

Well, thanks to a dedicated Catholic, St. Joseph can be rediscovered or maybe revealed for the first time at <http://www.politickles.com/thankevann>.

Designed by a home schooling mother, this website is filled with many tips, tricks, and techniques appropriate for all families. The site is called "Thank Evann," and the author hopes that we have something to be thankful for after visiting.

What especially caught my attention to this website was information about the St. Joseph Table, an Italian custom that we revitalized at Wadhams Hall Seminary a few years ago. There is even a blessing for this event in the official Book of Blessings. With origins in Sicily, the St. Joseph Table recalls a famine that ended upon petitions being made by the people to St. Joseph. In thanksgiving, they prepared a huge feast, gave thanks to St. Joseph, and then distributed the food to the poor.

This website not only has a fuller explanation, but an actual photograph of the table. Detailed directions for designing such a table for the home are provided. However, the most interesting part is a wide variety of recipes for the diverse foods traditionally served on this occasion. For those who want even more help in establishing this celebration, there is a reference to a book obtainable for purchase. You will notice that I mentioned

the availability of recipes. Most Italian cooks that I know are very reluctant to share recipes. So, we should be very grateful that these recipes are posted for the enjoyment of all.

The feast of St. Joseph occurs on March 19 during Lent. All of the recipes are meatless, but all are very good. The recipes are the best of Italian cuisine and are probably items that one does not usually find in an Italian restaurant. Not only has the webmaster provided an abundance of recipes, but there are also links to quite a few other sites that explain the celebration and provide even more recipes. If you are looking for a way to celebrate St. Joseph, this is definitely the place to check out. This section of the website is called the "virtual St. Joseph Altar." It is so well presented that readers will not be satisfied with virtual food, but will definitely want to make the virtual a reality.

Mardi Gras, the day before

Ash Wednesday, French for "Fat Tuesday," has traditional Catholic roots. New Orleans gets all the publicity, but this is a feast rooted in Catholic tradition that can be celebrated in any home. King Cake seems to be the Mardi Gras delicacy of choice. I won't spoil the surprise of letting the readers find for themselves the significance of King Cake. Suffice it to say that it is like a cinnamon roll, but there is something special inside.

Home schoolers will find many interesting and valuable

references. However, these references are not just for home schooling families. In this "goodies" section, I was able to find an abundance of information about science, art, an ever-expanding listing of textbooks, and religion projects to mention just a few.

This website is not overwhelming with resources, links, and pages. However, all the resources presented are nicely placed, easy to access, and worthy of a visit. As the webmaster hoped, we do have a reason to thank Evann.

Saint Joseph - taken for granted

Scripture Reflections



Epiphany, Jan. 6

Isaiah 60:1-6
Psalm 72
Ephesians 3:2-3, 5-6
Matthew 2:1-12

By Fr. Francis Cleary SJ
OUR GOOD NEWS: God's "secret" is finally revealed - Jesus is the Light of salvation for us Gentiles as well as for Jews!

Darkness can be frightening and dangerous, when human activity stops and life threatened by vague, unseen dangers.

Without the sun's light, all living beings would die and the world reduced to uninhabitable desert. "Rise up in splendor, Jerusalem! Your light has come, the glory of the Lord shines upon you! See, darkness covers the earth, and thick clouds cover the peoples; but upon you the LORD shines, and over you appears

Celebration of Epiphany

his glory."

Isaiah (first reading) had experienced worldwide darkness of hopelessness and despair, suddenly broken by a beam shining on Jerusalem.

No ordinary solar brightness this, but reflection of God's supernatural "glory," visible manifestation of his invisible majesty. The Lord comes as Israel's - and our - "light," by his personal presence bringing deliverance from all that impedes fullness of life.

Isaiah then compared universal salvation to a vast pilgrimage making its way to Jerusalem from the four corners of the world, "proclaiming the praises of the LORD." Israelites lead the procession, returning home from foreign exile.

Even babies in arms make the trip! All riches from land and sea will be transported on the backs of numberless camels, the eighteen-wheelers of the ancient Near East. This immense wealth would be brought to honor God in worship.

Moreover, Israel herself would be enriched by a grateful pagan world with "gold and frankincense" - its former glory restored, even enhanced.

Paul (second reading) reminds us of a child exploding with excitement because privy to a happy secret: "the mystery made known to me, but not made known to peoples in other generations." Christianity had burst into a cruel, hate-filled world with the

greatest of good news. Now it can be told!

The same blessings of salvation formerly restricted to Jews has graciously been made available to the whole non-Jewish world.

All along, God had a "secret plan" which centered on Christ Jesus, unique point of entrance into the community of the saved open to all peoples.

God's mystery works like this. Through Baptism, we become so intimately united with Jesus that his privilege as a Jew and member of God's Chosen People is now shared with us Gentiles.

The same promise of overwhelming divine love and blessing, repeatedly made to Israel through her prophets, now becomes our incomparable gift overcoming every barrier of race, color, age, sex, nationality or political allegiance.

In Jesus, the promised Messiah-Savior, everything falls into place; now at last we comprehend God's marvelously generous purpose.

Four prophecies from Isaiah and Psalm 72 were fulfilled in today's Gospel story about (a) the arrival in Jerusalem of certain pagan wise men (Magi). These came (b) "from the east," proverbial source of wisdom and mystery, (c) bearing "gifts of gold and frankincense" and (d) "paying homage" to Judaism's Messianic, end-time King. Truly, a fairy tale come true!

May They Rest in Peace

Next week marks the anniversary of the death of the following clergy of the diocese

- Dec. 30
Rev. Jean Baptiste Lemercier, 1863
Rev. Sam D'angelo, O.S.A., 1961
- Dec. 31
Rev. Joseph Butler, 1894
Rev. Benedict Granottier, 1930, Rt. Rev. Msgr. Clarence A. Kilts, V.F., 1949
- Jan. 1
Rev. Earl Leo Taylor, 1974
- Jan. 2
Rev. Henry William McFadden, 1978
- Jan. 3
Rev. A.J.M. Viau, 1966
Rev. Hilary Neal, O.P., 1986
- Jan. 4
Rev. James Edwin O'Haire, 1877
Rev. Michael Walsh, M.S.C., 1977
- Jan. 5
Rev. Louis Lebrett, O.M.I., 1903
Msgr. Dennis Lynch, 1979
Rev. Raoul J. Poirier, M. Afr., 1997

Beyond the Stained Glass

