



This Month's Heartfelt Matters

- Let us warm our hearts towards our neighbours, towards the needy.
- That at Christmas so many broken families may get together again.

I wish every single person in the Lay Community all the best for the holy season of Christmas, above all peace, joy, happiness and gratitude to Mary and Joseph, who lived in such a great holiness and devotion to Heaven all their lives.

Spiritually and with the blessing of st Joseph I am with you. Most kind and most sincere regards, your

Sister Paula



December 2011

Lay Community of St Joseph

Joseph, the Fiancé

Mary was betrothed to st Joseph before she heard the greeting and the good tidings. So her answer strikes us all the more as strange that she does not know man (Lk 1,26ff). After all, she knew and acknowledged Joseph as her fiancé. Only when we look into the souls of the betrothed couple will we find the key to the understanding of these words incomprehensible on the surface. Long before she was engaged to be married, probably from early childhood, Mary had already been bound by the vow of virginity made to GOD. Therefore she was not allowed or willing to acknowledge a husband by whom she could conceive and have a child. But why a betrothal just the same? Divine Providence plays a secret part in it. But we want to know when and how Mary came to be betrothed to st Joseph.

To devout Israelites marriage as such was a matter of course if only because of religious reasons. So, after adolescence, both Mary and Joseph were under pressure of public opinion and of their family in this matter. They were expected to be engaged to be married; there were warmest endeavours. St Joseph's attention may have

been drawn to Mary as being a worthy bride for him by priests related to him. Great importance was attached to equality of tribe and social standing. When Mary was given to Joseph, she was compelled to reveal the necessary condition of ever being able to get married. With Joseph she found someone with greatest understanding, with the most willing consent to a mutual, self-sacrificing consecration to GOD. Thus Joseph got engaged to Mary – the most holy Virgin. – Thus they were able to fulfil GOD's will and fit in with the views of their people at the same time.

One can hardly imagine the blending together of their souls. Under these circumstances Mary could safely tell, or rather, had to tell the Angel, who spoke about her future Child: „How can this be, since I have no husband?“ When Mary got engaged to Joseph, not only did Heaven rejoice, not only did Mary put the greatest confidence in his unselfish faithfulness, but whoever knew them could not but admit that these two excellently suit one another. Their souls and their minds harmonized perfectly in a holy spirit of sacrifice. The instruments of a virginal birth had been secured – the Angel of the LORD was ready for his mission.

Soon after their betrothal the Angel Gabriel took the heavenly salutation and the good news of Redemption to Nazareth to the Virgin Mary. – The divine Word became Flesh in Bethlehem in poverty beyond all telling. Mary has born the Saviour to the world.

Who understands the love of the Heavenly FATHER – who sends us His beloved SON – from the glory of Heaven to our poor, cold, and unloving world! –

Let the Whole World Shout for Joy

The Son of the highest Lord,
begotten before the morning star
and before all time,
condescended
from his heavenly throne
to come to the earth
as a Virgin's Son.

Let the whole world shout for joy
in the sight of God,
for in the darkness a great light
is falling during the night.
You, people, rejoice greatly,
who have waited for salvation,
the Lord has come.

He has proclaimed
his great mercy.
His peace shall henceforth reign
far and near on earth,
and in the deadly night
he brought us life
through his appearance.

Praised be his Name
of the Lord Jesus Christ,
who came to us men
and became Flesh.
He freed us all,
for which his praises are sung
throughout eternity.

(Maria Luise Thurmair)

