

December 18, 2006  
3rd Monday in Advent

Readings of the day may be found on the following link:

<http://www.nccbuscc.org/nab>

Jeremiah 23:5-8

Psalm 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19

Matthew 1:18-25

*"Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid..."*

My 5 year-old grandson has been asking me for an angel for a few weeks. Yesterday, when I gave him a small angel figurine, he was pleased, but informed me he wanted an angel to wear around his neck. When I asked him what he knew about angels and why he wanted one, he said, "They keep the bad guys away." I thought about this when I read today's gospel. We are invited today to sit with Joseph and take in his story—to see where it fits with our own and what it has to say to us about our life. I wondered, as I read this, what difference it might have made if Joseph had not heeded the words of that angel? What if he didn't take the message seriously? What if he dismissed what he heard and made his decision without the counsel of a wiser guide? This reminds me of the presence of angels in my own life—the guides, the teachers, the wisdom figures that pass my way briefly or walk with me daily. They come in all forms and they are easily missed. I appreciate this story of Joseph for it reminds me that we do not walk this path of life alone. We all need angels to keep the bad guys away—which, as adults, we know the bad guys can simply be our own blindness.

*Jesus, keep me awake as I wait for you.*