**The angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream**

**FRIDAY MARCH 19 (Mt 1,16.18-21.24)**

In Scripture dreams are told that foretell a person’s future. And they are accomplished in a mysterious way. The methods are never indicated. There is the dream not remembered by Nebuchadnezzar narrated and interpreted by Daniel. The Sirach puts well in guard from attachment to the dream: *"Empty and false are the hopes of the senseless, and fools are borne aloft by dreams. Like a man who catches at shadows or chases the wind, is the one who believes in dreams. What is seen in dreams is to reality what the reflection of a face is to the face itself. Can the unclean produce the clean? can the liar ever speak the truth? Divination,* *omens and dreams all are unreal; what you already expect, the mind depicts. Unless it be a vision specially sent by the Most High, fix not your heart on it; For dreams have led many astray, and those who believed in them have perished. The law is fulfilled without fail, and perfect wisdom is found in the mouth of the faithful man. "(Sir 34, 1-8).*There is also Joseph's dream which is very special among all dreams.

The Lord sends his Angel to him to always tell him what to do and where to go. It is a true revelation that does not happen while Joseph is awake, as in the Gospel according to Luke, it happened first with Zechariah and then with the Virgin Mary afterwards. Instead, it happens while Joseph is sleeping. Why the Lord chose this way is a great mystery. The angel speaks to him always and only in the dream. However, he does not speak to show him things. The word is a true command, a true mission, which must be carried out or completed instantly, without delay, without any delay. Joseph must not divorce Mary in secret. He must take her as his bride. He must also adopt the child and name him. This is true vocation. He is invested with a very high mission. In his hands the Father places his Only Begotten Son who is about to be born of the Virgin Mary. This is why St. Joseph is called the Custos of the Redeemer. The Father is the guardian. The Father guards him through Joseph. It is a unique mission in the history of salvation. The Son of God is placed in the hands of a man. He will have to guard, protect, nourish him, being for him a true father.

*Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary. Of her was born Jesus who is called the Messiah. Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the holy Spirit. Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly. Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins. "When he awoke from sleep, Joseph did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him. Word of the Lord.*

Joseph is the man of silence. We don't know a word of him. However, the Holy Spirit has revealed his thoughts to us twice. He is also the man of immediate obedience. After the angel has spoken, there is no room in his mind to think. Word heard; word obeyed. Order given; order executed. Command received; command accomplished. Immediately. Instantly. Without time intervals. It only takes a moment for Satan to ruin a man. Joseph did not allow Satan this moment, to harm Mary or the Child. Received the order, he immediately takes Mary in marriage. No one will be able to think about her, most chaste, most pure, virgin Mother, something not pure and not holy. Not even for Herod there is time to come to Jerusalem to kill Christ Jesus. Joseph gets up in the night, takes the child and his Mother and flees to Egypt. Satan with Joseph cannot act. He does not interpose a simple thought of his mind between command and obedience. Joseph is to be taken as a model of prompt, immediate obedience. Satan must not be given room to act. Even a second is enough for him and he fills hell fills souls.

Mother of the Redemption, Angels, Saints, make us of immediate, instant obedience.