

The Faith of Our Fathers

There is no other Savior against sin and death, no one else to help in heaven or earth, than this singular child of the Virgin Mary named Jesus. Good works are to be done, but they are not Jesus, do not save, cannot rescue from death. This child, however, saves and rescues from death. When we're assaulted by ordinary earthly misfortunes, we can counter them most likely with the usual human resources. But when we lie at death's door, then let go of all else, look only to this Savior, and say, "I know one doctor, advocate, emperor, king, pastor—namely, the child Jesus. He can and will save me from eternal death." (Blessed Martin Luther) ❧❧❧

My Jesus does not bear this name, like some before Him, as an empty title. With Him there is no foreshadowing of a great name, but rather the reality itself. Indeed, the Evangelist bears witness that the name is of heavenly origin. It is the name given Him by the Angel before He was conceived in the womb. Note the depth of the meaning in this word. He is called Jesus by men, and before His conception He had been called Jesus by an Angel. This means that He is Savior of both Angels and men: of Angels from the beginning of creation, of men from the time of incarnation. His name was called Jesus, says today's Gospel, the name given Him by the Angel. And that Word is manifested in the Gospel as the Word made flesh. (St. Bernard of Clairvaux) ❧❧❧

For the *Second Sunday after Christmas*. These excerpts are intended as meditative pieces for the Day's pericopes. They have been edited and abridged for style, sense and space.

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