

## Faith in 5-Adults

### St. Joseph

1. **St. Joseph** was the foster father of Jesus and spouse of Mary. By trade he was a carpenter, a man of modest means, from the line of King David. An angel of the Lord visited Joseph on four separate occasions, and like Mary, he was obedient to God's will:
  - He was told not to be afraid to take Mary as his wife (Mt. 1: 20-21)
  - He was urged to flee to Egypt (Mt. 2:13)
  - He was told to go back to Israel (Mt. 2:19-20)
  - He was warned and withdrew to Galilee (Mt. 2: 22)

In Jewish tradition, Joseph as head of the household was also rabbi ("teacher"), teaching Jesus the Jewish faith and leading the worship to God in their family. Jesus showed respect to his parents and was obedient to them (Luke 2:41-52).

[According to Pope Saint JP II](#), "Saint Joseph is a man of great spirit. He is great in faith, not because he speaks his own words, but above all because he listens to the words of the Living God. He listens in silence. And his heart ceaselessly perseveres in the readiness to accept the Truth contained in the word of the Living God".

2. St. Joseph has two feast days on the liturgical calendar. The primary solemnity feast is **March 19th**, which honors him in his compassionate role as Husband of Mary. Mary could have been stoned to death if St. Joseph proceeded to divorce her and a charge of infidelity brought against her. He protected Mary and cared for her and Jesus. Just as St. Joseph protected Christ the Child, so we can accept he is also protector of the body of Christ the Church. In 1870, Pope Pius IX declared St. Joseph Patron of the Universal Church. At the time, the Church was undergoing persecution; the faithful put their trust in God and in St. Joseph for protection.

The second is **May 1<sup>st</sup>**, a memorial honoring St. Joseph, the Worker. Pope Pius XII established this second feast day in 1955 to honor St. Joseph and the dignity of labor and the laborer. This feast day was established to counter the May celebration of the Communists, honoring their workers and atheist ideals. This feast also acknowledges the important work needed to build the Kingdom of God on earth.

3. St. Joseph is the patron saint of fathers, families, immigrants, workers, carpenters, and a happy death. He is said to have had a happy death, with Mary and Jesus by his side. He is the patron saint of Sicily, where he was credited as saving the town from drought.

Symbols associated with St. Joseph include the carpenter's square and white lily flowers. The carpenter's square represents Joseph's trade and adherence to Truth. The lily represents his holiness and obedience to God, and his faithful, celibate marriage to the Virgin Mary ("he had no relations with her" (Mt 1:25a)). Legend states that the lilies blooming on the staff were a divine sign to Mary's parents that she was to marry Joseph. Images of St. Joseph also include him carrying the Christ Child, as protector and loving father.

4. **What is the year of Joseph?** Pope Francis proclaimed a Year of St. Joseph on the 150th anniversary of St. Joseph being established as Patron of the Universal Church. This

commenced on Dec. 8, 2020 and concluded on Dec. 8, 2021. In our present day, the Church needs protection, help and guidance. St. Joseph leads us to the reality that despite what we are going through, God is with us. In his Apostolic Letter, [Patris Corda](#), Pope Francis writes, "Even through Joseph's fears, God's will, his history and his plan were at work. Joseph...teaches us that faith in God includes believing that He can work even through our fears, our frailties and our weaknesses". Pope Francis' purpose of declaring the Year of Joseph was to increase our love of St. Joseph, imitate his virtues and to seek his prayers on our behalf .

5.

#### **Prayer to St. Joseph by Pope Francis**

Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,  
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.  
To you God entrusted his only Son;  
in you Mary placed her trust;  
with you Christ became man.  
Blessed Joseph, to us too,  
show yourself a father  
and guide us in the path of life.  
Obtain for us grace, mercy, and courage,  
and defend us from every evil. Amen.

#### **Prayer Before Work to St. Joseph the Worker**

O Glorious Saint Joseph, model of all those who are devoted to labor, obtain for me the grace to work in a spirit of penance for the expiation of my many sins; to work conscientiously, putting the call of duty above my natural inclinations; to work with thankfulness and joy, considering it an honor to employ and develop by means of labor the gifts received from God; to work with order, peace, moderation, and patience, never shrinking from weariness and trials; to work above all with purity of intention and detachment from self, keeping unceasingly before my eyes death and the account that I must give of time lost, talents unused, good omitted, and vain complacency in success, so fatal to the work of God.

All for Jesus, all through Mary, all after thy example, O Patriarch, Saint Joseph. Such shall be my watch-word in life and in death. Amen. (Composed by Pope St. Pius X)

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