

# Solemnity of St Joseph

by Kirby Will, Consultant-Formation Identity and Outreach



As we approach the end of Lent and reflect on the love of a Father for his son, let us acknowledge the Traditional Owners and caretakers of the land, sea or skies on which you are reading this on or in. For tens of thousands of years the First Peoples of these spaces have proclaimed the sacredness of the land, seas, skies and waterways through story and song. We recognise First Peoples' continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present. May we always walk softly on this land and seek peace and justice for all people.

## Context

### St Joseph

Whilst we hear very little of Saint Joseph in the gospels, he is celebrated twice in the Church year. Today he is celebrated as the spouse of Mary and in May, we celebrate the Feast of St Joseph the Worker. As the spouse of Mary, Joseph provides us with an example of faith in ordinary experiences. As Sr Monica Cavanagh, Congregational Leader of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, reminds us, what is told of Joseph highlights the importance of faithful listening to God's word spoken in the ordinary experiences of one's life and the need to respond with generosity and courage. Joseph was an ordinary man who received an extraordinary calling from God and in doing so he teaches us to trust in God's providence quietly at work in our world and more importantly at work within our own families.



*The Dream of St Joseph, attributed to Bernardino Luini, Circa 1530, detached fresco, Circa 1480-1532. Photograph. Britannica ImageQuest, Encyclopædia Britannica, 25 May 2016. [quest.eb.com/images/126\\_539208](https://quest.eb.com/images/126_539208). Accessed 15 Mar 2024.*



*Rest on the flight into Egypt, Mary holding the infant Christ while St. Joseph points into the distance, copy after Cantarini. Photograph. Britannica ImageQuest, Encyclopædia Britannica, Apr 22 2020. [quest.eb.com/images/144\\_2863921](https://quest.eb.com/images/144_2863921). Accessed 15 Mar 2024.*

## Scripture

### Matthew 1:16, 18-21, 24a

Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary. Of her was born Jesus who is called the Christ. 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 Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home.

### The Gospel of the Lord

**Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

## Reflection by Kirby Will

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This scripture reminds us that even though we may have carefully constructed plans of our own, they do not always match the plans that God has for us. Joseph was faced with a difficult situation and had a choice to make. As Matthew tells us, he had decided to spare Mary shame and divorce her quietly as was expected of a righteous man of his time, however, this is not what God had in mind for Joseph. Instead, God invites Joseph to act beyond the rules of society. Faith often requires of us to act beyond the accepted rules of society, yet this is not always an easy decision, remember, even Joseph needed encouragement from God before he was ready to accept the path God dreamt for him. As society continues to evolve and challenge people of faith, this is particularly important for us as we reflect on what God may be calling us to do.

God calls us out of our comfort zones, and this often presents in the everyday actions of our lives; we do not need a big significant event to be out of our comfort zone, it may be as simple as trying a new routine or habit within our family that strengthens our faith. May we have the courage and faith to allow God's voice to be louder than the rationality and logic of the rules of society and see the fruits of trusting in the plans that God has for us.

## Prayer

### Pope Francis' Prayer to Saint Joseph 2020

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.



Go to Joseph, Jane Maisey, Accessed <https://www.designjane.com/post/go-to-joseph>

## Call to Action

- This week, why not make some time to pray the [Litany to St Joseph](#) as a family.
- You could learn more about St Joseph by watching this [video](#).
- Over dinner one night, why not discuss ways your family could carry out ordinary tasks with great love.
- Complete some (or all) of these [St Joseph](#) activities.
- Visit [Jane Maisey's](#) blogs and resource list to learn more about how a young Sister of St Joseph connects to the Patron saint of her order (she is the one who drew the contemporary image used in our prayer above).