

St. Joseph

Feast Day: 19th March

Joseph is a very special saint. He was a carpenter in Nazareth and was engaged to Mary. When he heard that Mary was to give birth to a child who would be the Son of God, he was afraid. He did not understand.

One night an angel appeared to him and told him not to be afraid. “Mary will have a son and he will be called Jesus.” Joseph realised he had been given a great honour. He knew at once what he must do. He would support Mary and love and care for her son as if he were his own.

As the time of the birth drew near, there was an official census. Everyone had to register in the place where they were born. Joseph was born in Bethlehem, so Mary and he made the long journey to the little town. They could not find anywhere to stay, but eventually a kindly innkeeper let them stay in his stable.

That night Jesus was born and Mary laid him carefully in the manger. Joseph knew the responsibility God had placed on him and he was determined to devote his life to caring for Mary and her newborn son, Jesus. Eventually the family returned to Nazareth. Joseph worked as a carpenter and as Jesus grew he enjoyed helping Joseph.

When Jesus was twelve years old the family travelled to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover. On the day that they were to return home to Nazareth, Mary and Joseph could not find Jesus. They searched the streets and the market place, but he was nowhere to be found. Finally, they returned to the temple and to their great relief and amazement they saw him sitting with a small crowd of learned men. He was teaching them and telling them about God. They could not understand how a young child could have such knowledge and wisdom. When Jesus saw Mary and Joseph, he saw the worry and concern in their faces and was sorry he had caused them so much pain. He said, “I’m sorry, I thought you knew I would be in the temple”. At first Mary and Joseph did not understand what he meant, but later they realised that the time would come when he would leave them to begin God’s work.

Today St. Joseph is revered as the protector of families, and is the patron saint of workers.

Prayer:

Lord,

Thank you for the care, love and protection St. Joseph offered Jesus.

I thank you for the care, love and protection of my parents, family, grandparents and carers.

Lord, help me to remember to thank them for their goodness to me.

Response: May the way I live, behave and speak be an example to others.

All: May the way I live, behave and speak be an example to others.

