

Saint Joseph, Foster Father of Jesus

Saint Joseph

Husband of Mary, Foster Father of Jesus,

Feast Day: March 19, May 1

Patron of: the Universal Church, Belgium, Canada, China and Peru, of workers (May 1st), fathers, the poor and craftsmen, and of a happy death.

Symbol: Infant Jesus, monstrance, chalice, cross, lamb, Bible, ladder, tools, dove, lily, rod, plane, carpenter's square

Joseph - Profile of Joseph the Earthly Father of Jesus Christ:

God chose Joseph to be the earthly father of Jesus. The Bible tells us in the Book of Matthew, that Joseph was a righteous man. His actions toward Mary, his fiance, revealed he was a kind and sensitive man. When Mary told Joseph she was pregnant, he had every right to feel disgraced. He knew the child was not his own, and Mary's apparent unfaithfulness carried a grave social stigma. Joseph not only had the right to divorce Mary, under Jewish law she could be put to death by stoning. Although Joseph's initial reaction was to break the engagement, the appropriate thing for a righteous man to do, he treated Mary with extreme kindness. He did not want to cause her further shame, so he decided to act quietly. But God sent an angel to Joseph to verify Mary's story and reassure him that his marriage to her was God's will. Joseph willingly obeyed God, in spite of the public humiliation he would face. Perhaps this noble quality made him God's choice for the Messiah's earthly father. The Bible does not reveal much detail about Joseph's role as father to Jesus Christ, but we know from Matthew, chapter one, that he was an excellent earthly example of integrity and righteousness. Joseph is last mentioned in Scripture when Jesus was 12 years old. We know that he passed on the carpentry trade to his son and raised him in the Jewish traditions and spiritual observances.

Accomplishments:

Joseph was the earthly father of Jesus, the man entrusted to raise the Son of God. Joseph was also a carpenter, or skilled craftsman. He obeyed God in the face of severe humiliation. He did the right thing before God, in the right manner.

Strengths:

Joseph was a man of strong conviction who lived out his beliefs in his actions. He was described in the Bible as a righteous man. Even when personally wronged, he had the quality of being sensitive to someone else's shame. He responded to God in obedience and he practiced self-control. Joseph is a wonderful biblical examples of integrity and godly character.

Life Lessons:

God honored Joseph's integrity by entrusting him with a great responsibility. It is not easy to entrust your children to someone else. Imagine God looking down to choose a man to raise his own son? Joseph had God's trust.

Mercy always triumphs. Joseph could have acted severely toward Mary's apparent indiscretion, but he chose to offer love and mercy, even when he thought he had been wronged.

Walking in obedience to God may result in humiliation and disgrace before men. When we obey God, even in the face of adversity and public shame, he leads and guides us.

Hometown:

Nazareth in Galilee.

Referenced in the Bible:

Matthew 1:16-2:23; Luke 1:22-2:52.

Occupation:

Carpenter, Craftsman.

Family Tree:

Wife - Mary

Children - Jesus, James, Joses, Judas, Simon and daughters.
The ancestors of Joseph are listed in Matthew 1:1-17 and Luke 3:23-37.