

## St Joseph

The Feast of St Joseph, the foster-father of Jesus, is celebrated every year on the 19<sup>th</sup> March, however, this year the Pope has said we will be celebrating St Joseph for the whole year! This makes 2021 The Year of St Joseph.



We see St Joseph in so many pictures and paintings but especially on Christmas cards, sometimes with Mary as they make their way slowly to Bethlehem with the donkey or, with Mary and the Baby Jesus in the stable.

The Bible doesn't tell us very much about St Joseph but what it does tell us is that he was a great father and husband, who took great care of Mary and of the son entrusted to him by God. The Bible tells us of a lot of difficult problems that Joseph faced in his life but also how he trusted in God and with God's help, found ways to get around the problems!

### Here are some of the problems:

- He was getting ready to marry Mary when he discovered that she was having a baby so he thought he should call off the wedding BUT he listened to the angel telling him it was God's Son and that they should still get married....so they did!
- Then when Mary was just about to have the baby Jesus, they got orders to go to Bethlehem where Joseph's family was from, to be counted in the census. So Joseph had to take care of Mary on the long walk from their home and then when they got to Bethlehem, as I'm sure you remember, they couldn't find anywhere to sleep. Joseph did not give up but kept searching until they found somewhere for Mary to give birth to Jesus.



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- Sometime after Jesus was born, Joseph had another dream in which an angel of God told him that Jesus was in danger from King Herod. The angel said that he needed to get up straight away, pack up and take Mary and the Baby Jesus to a different country – they went to Egypt – until King Herod died. Joseph had to make a new life for his wife and little son in a strange country until it was safe to return to their own land.
- When it was safe to return, once again Joseph had to take his family all the way back to Nazareth and set up his carpenter's shop so that he could look after his family. Long journeys were dangerous and difficult in those days.
- In the Bible too, we read about St Joseph who along with Mary, searched for Jesus for 3 days when he got separated from them on a trip to Jerusalem. This was when Jesus was about 12 years old. They eventually found Jesus safe and well and talking with the great religious leaders in the Temple, a very important church in Jerusalem. How worried he and Mary must have been for those days but still they did not give up searching until they found him.

So from all of these stories it is safe to say that Joseph was a man who trusted in God and who was also brave and caring! When you think about the times that he saved Jesus' life and kept him safe from danger, you realise he was a very great man.



**St Joseph pray for us! Help us to trust God as you did.**

Why don't you see if you can find any stories about St Joseph in your Bible at home?