

## The Solemnity of Saint Joseph

Under title of this feast we honor St. Joseph as Patron of the Church Universal. Each parish, each city, each diocese, each country may place itself under the tutelage of some particular saint, but it is the special privilege and distinction of St. Joseph that he is Patron of the entire Catholic Church throughout the whole world.

And rightly so. In the earthly days of our Divine Lord, he was the chosen protector and guardian of the Holy Family. That Holy Family still continues to exist, and we who belong to the Church of God are its members. For by sanctifying grace we are made the adopted children of God and brothers of Jesus Christ. "Behold what manner of charity the Father hath bestowed upon us," says the Beloved Disciple, "that we should be called and should be the sons of God." Therefore we are by this divine gift of grace members of Christ's own household, the adopted children of the Holy Family. And St. Joseph is also our foster-father and special protector.

Other saints may appeal to particular classes of people—St. Francis Xavier to the zealous missionary, St. Vincent de Paul and St. Camillus to the Christian Social workers, St. Aloysius to innocent boyhood, St. Mary Magdalen to the converted sinner, St. John Chrysostom to the golden-tongued orator, St. Thomas of Aquin to the seeker after knowledge—but St. Joseph makes a direct appeal to every class of people.

He was the guardian of Jesus Christ, Who is the great missionary, Who is charity itself, Who is the lover of childhood, the friend of sinners, the light of the world, the source and soul of eloquence.

He was also the guardian of her who is the Virgin most Powerful, the Seat of Wisdom, the Comforter of the Afflicted, the Mother most Chaste, the Queen of Heaven and Earth.

And therefore St. Joseph is by every right and title the guardian and patron of the children of God in every walk and condition of life. This is the important truth that the Church wishes us to learn from this solemn festival, in order that learning it, we may be led to invoke the protection of our foster-father and profit by his benign guidance.

Little is known of the personal history of St. Joseph. From the first chapters of the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke, we learn that St. Joseph was a descendant of the royal family of David. His native city was Bethlehem, but at the time when the Gospel narrative opens, he was living at Nazareth, where perhaps he had taken up his residence in search of a better opportunity to ply his trade of carpenter. Here he met and was espoused to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and later married to her, though he remained a virgin his whole life.

The written history of St. Joseph is a history on the one hand of constant difficulty and trial, and on the other of humble and child-like obedience to the will of God. There was the difficulty of the conception of the Infant Child, the miraculous nature of which

was at first unknown to Joseph; there was the difficulty of the journey to Bethlehem for enrolment at a most trying period in the life of the Blessed Virgin; there was the difficulty of the flight to the unknown land of Egypt to escape the murderous designs of Herod; there was the difficulty of the lost child in the Temple and the painful three days' search for Him.

But in all the trials not a word of complaint ever escaped his lips. On each occasion we find immediate and unquestioning submission to the will of God. Obedience indeed may be called the keystone of St. Joseph's sanctity and greatness.

"If we ask," says one author in speaking of St. Joseph, "the one reason why he was called 'the just man,' if we seek to know why he above all others was chosen to be the guardian of the Holy Family, the answer is: Because, more than any other saint, St. Joseph was the saint of obedience. And if it be asked what one great thing St. Joseph did in this world, the answer we give is: He obeyed, he obeyed, and again he obeyed."

Unhappily the self-willed, self-indulgent, pleasure-seeking world has apparently become oblivious of the importance and beauty of this homely virtue of obedience. But we who are the adopted children of the Holy Family should certainly strive to follow in the footsteps of our Patron and Guide, and to enable and sanctify our lives by the practice of this virtue.

By his humble obedience, St. Joseph merited the grace of living in close union with Jesus on earth, and of breathing out his soul peacefully on the bosom of Jesus in death. This is the great grace that St. Joseph will obtain for those who are faithful to invoke his protection and to imitate his example of generous obedience to God's holy will.

### PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH.

God Who in Thine ineffable Providence didst vouchsafe to choose blessed Joseph to be the husband of thy most holy Mother, grant, we beseech Thee, that we may be made worthy to have him for our intercessor in heaven, whom on earth we venerate as our holy protector. Who livest and reignest, world without end. Amen.—An indulgence of 300 days, once a day, Pius X. March 18, 1909.

### THE CONVENT PUKEKOHE RESULTS OF RECENT EXAMINATIONS

The Convent, Pukekohe, has again been very successful in the various examinations held near the end of the year 1924.

One member of the teaching staff obtained a Final B.A., and one a Teacher's B Certificate. The following pupils were also successful:—Intermediate examination—Bessie Ryan, Rose Malone, and Jean Benneman. Intermediate Shorthand—Alma Armstrong, Marjorie Parris. Theory, Intermediate

grade (honors)—Muriel Thomas 100, Lila Rae 97, Kathleen Neil 86; pass: Ethel Cronin 76, Mary McGuire 60. Junior Grade (honors)—Nellie Jordan 98, Dorothy Sprowl 96, Lorna Courtney 92, Dolly Ihaka 83, Mollie Michie 80.

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