

## Saint Joseph the Worker



On March 19, the Church celebrates the Solemnity of Saint Joseph, Husband of Mary. This Feast Day is often celebrated with a special tradition called the Saint Joseph Table. But did you know that there is another feast of Saint Joseph on our Church Calendar? May 1 on the Church's Calendar is the Optional Memorial of Saint Joseph the Worker. While the March 19 feast of Saint Joseph has been celebrated for centuries, the May 1 feast of Saint Joseph the Worker was added to the Church's Calendar in 1955 by Pope Pius XII.

Why do you think Pope Pius XII chose May 1 as the feast day for Saint Joseph the Worker? Communists celebrated May Day on May 1 to recognize laborers. The Pope wanted to celebrate a Christian feast for workers and laborers, so he chose May 1 to be a Christian feast day for workers, with Saint Joseph as their patron.

Recall from the Bible that Saint Joseph was a carpenter. He taught Jesus his trade in their home at Nazareth. What type of work do the adults in your family do? What have they taught you? Have they taught you to wash dishes, or do laundry, or rake leaves, or mow the lawn, or wash the car?

We know that work is important and that work is holy, too. God worked when God created the world. God worked to create the world, and rested when this work was finished. When we work, our work is part of this holy work of God, too. That is why it is very important that whatever work we do, we do the best job we can do. That is also why it is important that we always treat all workers with respect, and that all those who work are treated fairly.

Sometimes we may not even realize all the work that people do. Just

think about today. Think of the people who built your house and the furniture in it, including the bed you woke up in! What about the workers who made the clothes you are wearing, and the farmers who raised the animals and crops that will be your food today? How about the teachers who are working in your school so you can learn? Who wrote your textbooks? Who keeps your school clean? Who drives your school bus? What about the mail carrier who will deliver the mail to your home? What is some other work people do that will be part of your life today?



Saint Joseph is the Patron Saint of all workers. But sometimes people lose their jobs or cannot find work. This is a very sad thing to happen. When this happens we can pray to Saint Joseph, as well, and ask Saint Joseph to intercede to help people find work.

What work do you do? You are a student, so you are working to learn. Do you have chores at home? Maybe you are old enough to baby sit or deliver newspapers, or shovel snow in the winter. You can pray to Saint Joseph to guide your work, and the work of others, as well. You can also pray to Saint Joseph to help you choose your life's work. Will you be a teacher, or a doctor, or a homemaker, or maybe even a carpenter like Saint Joseph? Whatever your work may be, when you do it for the glory of God, it is holy and blessed!

Remember to say a special thank you to all workers today for the work they do – your parents, your teachers, the cafeteria workers, and your pastor – everyone you meet today! You could even say, "Thank you for the good work you are doing, and may Saint Joseph bless all your efforts!"