

Dear Brothers and Sisters



Happy Father's Day! I share with you five lessons from Saint Joseph on the meaning of his Fatherhood.

1. The Gospel tells us that the child Jesus was obedient to his parents, and grew in wisdom and stature. This obedience comes from the fact that St. Joseph was himself **obedient**. Joseph was obedient to God's Will throughout his life. Joseph listened to the Angel of the Lord explain the virgin birth in a dream and then took Mary as his wife (Matthew 1:20-24). He was obedient when he led his family to Egypt to escape Herod's infanticide in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:13-15). Joseph obeyed the angel's later commands to return to Israel (Matthew 2:19-20) and settle in Nazareth with Mary and Jesus (Matthew 2:22-23). He did not let pride get in the way of his obedience to God?
2. Saint Joseph was **selfless**. In the limited knowledge we have about Joseph, we see a man who only thought of serving Mary and Jesus, never himself. What many may see as sacrifices on his part, were actually acts of selfless love. His devotion to his family is a model for fathers today. Joseph did not let disordered attachments to the things of this world distort his focus or hinder his vocation.
3. Saint Joseph led by **example**. None of his words are written in Scripture, but we can clearly see by his actions that he was a just, loving and faithful man. We often think that we primarily influence others by what we say, when so often we are watched for our actions. Every recorded decision and action made by this great saint is the standard for men to follow today.
4. Saint Joseph was a **worker**. He was a simple craftsman who served his neighbors through his handiwork. He taught his foster son Jesus the value of hard work. We can all learn a great lesson from Saint Joseph, who is also the patron saint of workers, on the value of our daily work and how it should exist to glorify God, support our families and contribute to society.
5. Saint Joseph was a **leader**. But, not in the way we may view leadership today. He led as a loving husband when he improvised to find a stable for Mary to give birth to Jesus, after being turned away from the Bethlehem inn. He led as a man of faith when he took the pregnant Mary as his wife and later brought the Holy Family safely to Egypt. He led as the family provider as a worker. He led as a teacher by teaching Jesus his trade and how to live and work as a man.

May God Bless all our Fathers today. May they be strong fathers and husbands, leaders in our parish, good stewards in the community and humble followers of Christ. May they emulate St. Joseph each day, and thus be that much closer to becoming the men they are called to be.

Fr. Sean