

St Joseph's Day Prayer Service

*Prepared by the Catholic Identity and Religious Education Team,
Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Sale*

This prayer service may be used at any time during the Year of St Joseph, but especially for the Solemnity of St Joseph (19th March) and St Joseph the Worker (1st May)

Welcome/Introduction

School's Acknowledgement to Country.

Today, March 19th we celebrate the feast of St Joseph.

Everything we know about St Joseph suggests that he showed many admirable qualities throughout his life.

Qualities such as:

- Humility
- Patience
- Faithfulness
- Obedience
- Loyalty

As the husband of Mary and foster-father of Jesus, Joseph had a very important role. Joseph became a model of faithful service to others by placing Mary and Jesus', needs before his own. He shows us how to look after each other with compassion, care and concern.

Joseph was brave and willing to accept hardships. At these times, he turned to God for help and guidance. He never failed to protect and provide for his family and he is remembered as a hard worker.

As we celebrate this special day we remember that "St Joseph was an ordinary sort of man on whom God relied to do great things. He did exactly what the Lord wanted him to do, in each and every event that went to make up his life."

St Joseph is an example to us of how an ordinary person can have extraordinary love for others. How lucky we are to have St Joseph keeping a watchful guiding role over us.

Entrance Song **Song to Joseph** (Michael Mangan in Sing Your Joy/Saints and Celebrations)

Opening Prayer

Leader Let us begin with the sign of the cross. In the name of the Father.....
Let us pray,
Father, your Son Jesus was cared for by St Joseph.
By his prayers may we always know your love and protection.
We ask through Christ the Lord

All **Amen.**

Penitential Rite

Lord Jesus, you were obedient to Mary and Joseph.

All Lord have mercy

Lord Jesus, you teach us to love others.

All Christ have mercy

Lord Jesus, you forgive those who are sorry.

All Lord have mercy

May almighty God have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life.

All Amen.

Gospel Reading (Matthew 1: 16, 18-21, 24a)

Reader The Lord be with you.

All And with your Spirit.

Reader A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

All Glory to you O Lord.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with Child of the Holy Spirit; and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to send her away quietly. But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins. When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took Mary as his wife.

The Gospel of the Lord

All Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection *(to be accompanied with picture that students have drawn or a dramatisation)*

Student 1

Scripture tells us very little about Joseph's life, and there is much we wish we could know what is made clear however, is that Joseph was "a righteous man" and a loving husband and father. Here are some stories from the Bible that tell us about Joseph.

Student 2

St Joseph was a descendent from David, one of the greatest kings of Israel. He lived in Bethlehem but he moved to Nazareth to work as a builder or a carpenter. Saint Joseph was chosen by God to be Jesus' father on earth. God knew that Jesus would need a foster father

to raise him and teach him. In Matthew's Gospel, we hear that Joseph was a 'just man.' This means he was a good, honest, fair, and God-loving person.

Student 3

We know Joseph was man of faith, obedient to whatever God asked of him without knowing the outcome. When an angel came to Joseph in a dream and told him about the child Mary was carrying, Joseph took Mary as his wife and promised to protect the child as he grew up. Joseph trusted God. He married Mary and took her into his home.

Student 4

Joseph then took Mary to Bethlehem for the census. Joseph walked all the way, for many days and he had a donkey for Mary, who was pregnant, to ride on. He also tried his best to find a place for Mary to stay when Jesus was being born. Joseph was showing care and concern for his wife and the baby she was carrying.

Student 5

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the angel came again to tell Joseph that his family was in danger. Joseph immediately left everything he owned, all his family and friends. He put his faith into God's hands, and fled to a strange country with his young wife and the baby to escape Herod's soldiers. He waited in Egypt without question until it was safe to go back.

Student 6

When Jesus was young, he went missing for three days and finally Joseph and Mary found him in the Temple, teaching the scribes and elders. Joseph's one concern was for the safety of the child he loved so much and who had been entrusted to him from God. When Jesus stayed in the Temple we are told Joseph (along with Mary) searched and searched for him. Imagine how worried they must have been! Their precious child lost in a crowd. When they found Jesus, they returned home to Nazareth.

Prayer of the Faithful

Leader We bring our prayers to God with the qualities of Joseph in our thoughts.

Student For Pope Francis, Bishop Greg and all clergy and religious, that they may have the strength to lead their people in justice and peace. Lord, hear us.

All **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Student For the leaders of all nations, that they will act with love, kindness, and peace, and work together for the good of all. Lord, hear us

All **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Student For our local community and its needs: that we, like St Joseph, will act as witnesses to the love and mercy of Christ by putting the needs of others before our own. Lord, hear us

All **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Student For members within our community who are suffering, are sick or have died.
Lord, hear us

All **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader Father, hear these prayers which we have made in faith and give us your protection, just as Jesus was given the love and care of St Joseph.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All **Amen**

Let us now join together in prayer

All **Dear Lord,**

**We give thanks for our school
and all the opportunities it gives us
to grow and experience new challenges.
Help us to follow in the footsteps
of Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop.
Together we can work
for peace in our community
and for others in our world.
We ask St Joseph
to protect and guide all teachers,
parents and children as they work and play.
Lord, we pray that you will carry us
in your loving hands
and guide us into the future.
Amen.**

Closing Prayer

Reader St Joseph's day marks a very important day for our school community, we think of the life of Joseph and his qualities and we strive to live these throughout our lives. Joseph cared for Mary and Jesus, he was a faithful man who did God's will, he was a carpenter, a wonderful father and was very hardworking. Today we ask that God blesses all of us gathered here, so that we may be able to follow in the footsteps of Jesus and his father on earth, St Joseph.

Leader May the love of Jesus draw us to closer to himself.
May the power of the Lord Jesus strengthen us in his service.
May the joy of the Lord Jesus fill our souls.
May the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be amongst us and remain with us always.

All **Amen**

Final Song My Spirit Sings (Michael Mangan in *Forever I Will Sing/ Sing Your Joy/ Catholic Worship Book 2-412*)

A Litany of St. Joseph

Praying the litany

This litany is a recognition and joyous praise of Joseph's virtues as a person... what he was like, what he did and how important he is in the faith journey of the followers of Jesus. It is meant to be said aloud as we declare in one voice our understanding and appreciation of St. Joseph.

Lord, have mercy. *Lord, have mercy.*
Christ, have mercy. *Christ, have mercy.*
Lord, have mercy. *Lord, have mercy.*
Jesus, hear us. *Jesus, graciously hear us.*



The Angel's Message of Joy

"... an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. 'Joseph, son of David,' the angel said, 'do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit.'" (Matthew 1:20)

God, the Father of Heaven, *have mercy on us.*
God, the Son, Redeemer of the world, *have mercy on us.*
God, the Holy Spirit, *have mercy on us.*
Holy Trinity, One God, *have mercy on us.*



The Saviour's Birth

"... the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord." (Luke 2:10-11)

St. Joseph, *pray for us.*
Descendent of David, *pray for us.*
Spouse of the Mother of God, *pray for us.*
Guardian of the Virgin Mary, *pray for us.*
Foster father of the Son of God, *pray for us.*
Protector of the Christ child, *pray for us.*



Joseph escapes with the family

"...an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt... for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.'" (Matthew 2: 13)

Joseph most daring,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Joseph most dedicated,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Joseph most trusting,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Joseph most courageous,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Joseph most protective,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Joseph most faithful,	<i>pray for us.</i>



Holy Life with Jesus and Mary

“When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth.” (Luke 2:39)

Example of patience,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Embrace of poverty,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Model of workers,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Glory of home life,	<i>pray for us.</i>

Strength of families,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Comfort of the suffering,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Hope of the sick,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Patron of the dying,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Protector of Holy Church,	<i>pray for us.</i>

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,	<i>hear us, O Lord.</i>
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,	<i>hear us, O Lord.</i>
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,	<i>graciously hear us, O Lord.</i>

Let us pray,
 God of our hearts,
 you were pleased to choose Blessed Joseph,
 the humble carpenter from Nazareth,
 to be the spouse of gentle Mary
 and strong mentor to your only son.
 May we develop similar humility and resilience
 in our lives and come to rely on Joseph as our protector also.
 We make this prayer through him who made his home among us,
 Jesus, your only son, our Lord and Brother.

All Amen

Saint Joseph, spouse of Mary and protector of God’s family

All pray for us.

And let us always remember

All to pray for one another. Amen.