

November 2024 is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Diocese of Arlington-our Golden Jubilee!! We are in Year 2 of preparation for our Jubilee. Theme for Year 2: “My soul rejoices in the Lord!”



## Solemnity of St. Joseph, Husband of Mary

March 19<sup>th</sup>

St. Joseph is the Patron of the Universal Church. He was chosen by God to be the spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary who conceived of the Holy Spirit. The Incarnation was made possible through their consent. Together, they participated in the work of salvation, protecting and providing for the Child Jesus.

God the Son left his Heavenly Throne to enter the world as an infant, totally dependent on his Mother and foster father. St. John Paul II said that the “...history of mankind, the history of salvation, passes by way of the family.” Mary and Joseph were the very first to behold the Incarnation. Perfect Love abided in this Holy Family.

St. Joseph was endowed with many virtues as the head of the Holy Family. It was an act of pure love that enabled St. Joseph to take Mary into his home at the prompting of the Archangel Gabriel though she was found to be with child. Joseph exhibited great trust when traveling to Bethlehem as Mary was about to deliver the Christ Child. Joseph was courageous when fleeing to Egypt with the Holy Family as Herod sought the life of Jesus. Joseph was obedient in returning with Jesus and Mary to Israel. As defender of Jesus, Joseph settled in Nazareth to avoid Herod’s son Archelaus in case he also wished to harm Jesus.

From Heaven, Joseph continues to extend his fatherly protection over the Body of Christ which is mystically united to the Church. He remains united to his spouse Mary, Mother of the Church. While the Blessed Mother mercifully seeks souls to bring to her Beloved Son, St. Joseph guards the Church “from the gates of hell.” Blessed Pius IX proclaimed St. Joseph Patron of the Universal Church in 1870 precisely for his role as protector of the Church.

As marriage and fatherhood has decreased in importance, and is even attacked in the secular world, the Church has renewed devotion and honor to St. Joseph, the most holy of husbands and fathers. St. John XXIII added the name of St. Joseph to Eucharistic Prayer I (the Roman Canon) in 1962 so that during consecration, when the priest invokes the name of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the clause “with blessed Joseph, her spouse” is now included. In 2013, Pope Francis formally instituted the change that Eucharistic Prayers II, III, and IV also invoke the name of St. Joseph. Calling upon the patronage of St. Joseph at every Mass makes us aware that he is and has always been a part of our liturgy and has an essential role in our salvation. Now the entire Holy Family is evoked at Mass.

At Fatima, in 1917, along with the apparition of the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph appeared, holding the Christ Child and blessing the world.

*Happy Solemnity of St. Joseph!*

This year, we focus on Mary, the [Mediatrice of All Graces](#), the model disciple, who shows us how to receive and bear the Word to the world. For more on Year 2 preparation, visit: [www.arlingtondiocese.org/goldenjubiliecelebration/](http://www.arlingtondiocese.org/goldenjubiliecelebration/) -From the Office of Religious Education