

The Year of St. Joseph – Apostolic Letter of Pope Francis

Pope Francis describes St. Joseph as the obedient father. He listened to the Word of God quietly and then responded. God speaks to us individually in ways in which we can understand in our day and in our time. Allow me now to quote Pope Francis in his letter *Patris Corde* (With a Father's Heart).

“As God had done with Mary, God revealed his sacred saving plan to Joseph. He did so by using dreams, which in the Bible and among all ancient peoples, were considered a way for him to make his will known.

In the first dream an angel helps Joseph resolve his great dilemma: “Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.”

In the second dream, the angel tells Joseph “Get up take the child and his mother and flee to Egypt and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child to destroy him.”

In the third dream, the angel told him that those who sought to kill the child were dead and ordered him to rise, take the child and his mother and return to the land of Israel. Joseph promptly obeyed.

As Joseph returned to Palestine he was warned in a dream, now for the fourth time. He went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth.

All this makes it clear that St. Joseph was called by God to serve the person and mission of Jesus directly through exercise of his fatherhood and that this way he cooperated in the fullness of time to the great mystery of salvation and is truly a minister of salvation”.

Joseph accepted Mary unconditionally. He trusted in the angels words. Joseph is a strong but quiet man.

Joseph says no words in the gospel. He listened attentively to our God as he spoke to him and then acted out this divine plan. Note especially, that God's words are quite silent in a dream and Joseph's response is also quite silent. If one wants to hear God, you set aside a time of silence. You must travel up the mountain to be alone with God and converse with God. Wherever that mountain is in your life, travel it.