

Homily for the Solemnity of St. Joseph
St. Joseph Academy
Bishop Felipe J. Estévez
St. Augustine, Florida
March 20, 2017

The extraordinary thing of St. Joseph is that he excelled in the ordinary life. He was a just man, a righteous man, which is the only word that Scriptures says about his personality.

His faith was like the faith of Father Abraham. Without knowing why God needed him for his high purposes, he consented in saying yes to God, and saying yes to God's desires was all what mattered.

A son of David, Joseph's life was to serve God's plan. He was to be a chaste and pure custodian of the Son of God and of His Mother, the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, and his own spouse.

Pope Francis has in his room an image of Joseph sleeping. The reason of this posture is that God spoke to him in his dreams. God's words became calls to action as he had to flee to Egypt to protect the Child from Herod. In his dream, he understood the sacredness of Mary's divine pregnancy.

We need to properly understand the words of the Scriptures where knowing that the virgin, his bride, was pregnant he considered divorcing her. Scholars have interpreted this verse as Joseph felt so unworthy to deal with the Mother of God's pregnancy that he was tempted to move away from her out of reverence for what God was doing in her life.

Joseph accepted the sublime challenge and God blessed him by enabling him to name the Son of Mary and the Heavenly Eternal Father. He named him Jesus, which means the Savior. Ever since, millions have uttered the holy name of Jesus as an opportune gate to enter into his Sacred Heart.

Blessed are the pure of heart for they shall see God. Joseph of Nazareth was so blessed, so pure that God chose him from among all men to be the one who would know Mary's intimate life and to be the educator, the father figure for the divine Child.

Scriptures say it is not so much the one who says "Lord, Lord,...shall enter the Kingdom of heaven, but that one that does the will of my Father who is in heaven" (Matt 7:21). Joseph exemplifies the silent Knight, the silent but most effective doer of God's will.

Joseph is often known as Joseph of Nazareth, there in that school he learned to pray, to appreciate silence, to affirm family life and daily work, to do all ordinary tasks with extraordinary self-giving love. He is the patron of all workers.

Why was the Academy named after St Joseph? The Sisters of St Joseph of St. Augustine wanted to honor him by sharing their great love for Joseph with us all. We are indebted in great gratitude to the Sisters for this choice. In fact St. Joseph was declared Patron of the Universal Church as the Sisters were arriving from Le Puys, France to our beloved St. Augustine. We are blessed that we have such a pure example, such a model to remember often. We do know that he intercedes for each one of you, that you may growth in faith, hope and love.

Each victory of the Academy in the field of sports, in the world of academics, in achievements of our alumni and our faculty of any kind, we honor Him because your name is associated to His name. It is wonderful to have St. Joseph on your side, as your protector and custodian. The great St. Teresa of Avila would make reference to him in all her troubles and challenges for she was so convinced of his invisible support.