



**Brothers of
the Christian
Schools**



CLOSING THE YEAR OF SAINT JOSEPH REFLECTION

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*Take Saint Joseph as your model, since he is your patron, and strive to make yourself worthy of your ministry and to excel in virtue after the example of this great saint
(DLS Meditation 110.1)*

On behalf of all of us, I thank Brother Rafa Matas for coordinating our events for the Year of Saint Joseph, the Communication Service for highlighting those events on our webpage and all involved in organizing the various activities including today's closing service.

Sometimes it is difficult to imagine the life of a saint, especially one like Saint Joseph for whom we have so little information. There is not one word spoken by Saint Joseph that is recorded in the Bible. Perhaps recalling some special moments with our own parents, reflecting especially on our fathers can give us some insight into his life. We might particularly recall those occasions when we may have needed our father's help and protection. Using our imagination and our personal stories can help us better appreciate this man entrusted with the childhood and young life of the Son of God.

While it may be difficult to imagine the life of Saint Joseph, you and I share similarities with his life. Ordinary men and women, going about our lives – often hidden and quiet - loving one another, raising children or teaching students, experiencing the joys and sufferings of life, its hopes and challenges, the unexpected twists and turns in our lives – both good and bad - that come with family life, or religious life, or priesthood.

Remembering our own stories can help us imagine Joseph as the spouse of Mary and the father of Jesus. Like any parent or educator, Joseph shared his knowledge, skills and love. He taught Jesus the art of carpentry and the fundamental values of his Jewish faith. Perhaps in that carpentry shop he may have shared stories of Jesus' own childhood with him; of the time they had to flee to Egypt as immigrants. Or when Jesus was lost and he and Mary found him speaking with the elders in the Temple. I wonder what Joseph said to Jesus on that occasion. We know what Mary said for it is recorded in the Gospel of Luke. But from Joseph, we have no word.



“Joseph did not have to say much to be an eloquent witness to God. He did so by way of his daily activities in a hidden, quiet life.”¹ That is the example he gives us for our own lives.

Interestingly, what we learn most about Joseph are through his dreams, “... dreams in which he hears voices, as once he believed he heard a voice that loved and trusted him enough to place a son – and the son’s mother – in his faltering, capable, and very human hands”.² Dreams that told him his would not be a natural family that any couple anticipates in their marriage. No, as one spiritual writer relates, “rather than the natural family Joseph had expected, he took God’s unnatural mercy into his house, welcoming not only Mary but with her the work of the Holy Spirit and an unknown child. By accepting an event that transcended human understanding, the Holy Family became the core of a human family built on a graced charity that expands natural affection”.³ We too are called to be people that expand our love and care beyond our immediate families, welcoming all our brothers and sisters in this common home we share on earth as Pope Francis often reminds us.

With Saint Joseph, and as members of the global Lasallian Family, may we always “strive to recognize the Child that he loved and protected in every poor, needy, suffering or dying person, every stranger, every prisoner, every infirmed person”.⁴ In doing so, we bring the Reign of God that much closer to fruition.

¹ Crawford, John, FSC. “Saint Joseph, Our Model and Guide”, De La Salle Today, Autumn, 2021.

² Mariani, Paul. Awake My Soul, Reflection in Give Us This Day, March, 2015.

³ Belcher, Kimberly Hope. Reflection, Give Us This Day, March, 2019.

⁴ (Cf. Brother Armin Luistro. Letter introducing the painting of St. Joseph by Ryan Carreon Aragon, 2021.