



learn both. And so I felt completely lost and out of place. My superior did not want to displace me because I was the only one who could stay in this country without any problems. By this time there were nothing but elderly and sick sisters in need of help.

What could I do? I prayed to st Joseph to find a solution. Because I thought that I would not be able to put up with this situation in the long run. And st Joseph really came to my aid. On a Wednesday I received a little message from my highest superiors that I could return to the United States, because one of the employees had retired. I was granted this help after two months of fervent prayer. I was very glad to return home and am able to join the community once again. I sincerely thank st Joseph for his wonderful help in my distress. (Sister M.C.)

This Month's Heartfelt Matters

- The month of March is assigned to st Joseph – so he will have a special ear for our intentions. Let us ask him for peace on earth and to protect all persecuted Christians.



With kind regards and with the blessing of saint Joseph I say goodbye again,

Sister Paula



March 2015

Lay Community of St Joseph

The Census

Journeying to Bethlehem for the census in obedience to the orders of legitimate authority, Joseph fulfilled for the Child the significant task of officially inserting the name 'JESUS, Son of Joseph of Nazareth' (cf. John 1,45) in the registry of the Roman Empire. This registration clearly shows that JESUS belongs to the human race as a Man among men, a Citizen of this world, subject to laws and civil institutions, but also 'Saviour of the world.' Origen gives a good description of the theological significance, by no means marginal, of this historical fact: „Since the first census of the whole world took place under Caesar Augustus, and among all the others Joseph, too, went to register together with Mary, his wife, who was with Child, and since JESUS was born before the census was completed, to the person who makes a careful examination it will appear that a kind of mystery is expressed in the fact that at the time when all people in the world presented themselves to be counted, CHRIST, too, should be counted: by being registered with everyone, He could sanctify everyone; inscribed with the whole world in the census, He offered to the world communion with Himself, and after presenting Himself He wrote all the people

of the world in the book of the living, so that as many as believed in Him could then be written in Heaven with the Saints of GOD, to whom be glory and power from eternity to eternity. Amen.“

The Birth at Bethlehem

As guardian of the mystery ‘hidden from everlasting in the mind of GOD,’ which begins to unfold before his eyes ‘in the fullness of time,’ Joseph, together with Mary, is a privileged witness to the birth of the Son of GOD into the world on Christmas night in Bethlehem. Luke writes: „And while they were there, the time came for Mary to be delivered. And she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.“ (Lk 2,6-7)

Joseph was an eyewitness to this birth, which took place in conditions that, humanly speaking, were embarrassing – a first announcement of that ‘self-emptying’ (cf. Phil 2,5-8) which CHRIST freely accepted for the forgiveness of sins. Joseph also witnessed the adoration of the shepherds who arrived at JESUS’ birthplace after the Angel had brought them the great and happy news (cf. Lk 2,15-16). Later he also witnessed the homage of the Magi who came from the East (cf. Mt 2,11).

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The Circumcision

A son’s circumcision was the first religious obligation of a father, and with this ceremony (cf. Lk 2,21) Joseph exercised his right and duty with regard to JESUS. – The principle which holds that all the rites of the Old Testament are a shadow of the reality (cf. Heb 9,9f; 10,1) serves to explain why JESUS would accept them. As with all the other rites, circumcision, too, is ‘fulfilled’ in JESUS. GOD’s covenant with Abraham, of which circumcision was the sign (cf. Gn 17,13), reaches its full validity and perfect realization in JESUS, who is the ‘yes’ of all the ancient promises (cf. 2 Cor 1,20).

Conferral of the Name

At the circumcision Joseph names the Child JESUS. This is the only Name in which there is salvation (cf. Acts 4,12). Its significance had been revealed to Joseph at the moment of his ‘annunciation.’ „You shall call the child Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.“ (Mt 1,21) In conferring the name, Joseph declares his own legal fatherhood over JESUS, and in speaking the name he proclaims JESUS’ mission as Saviour.

Excerpt from the apostolic exhortation
of Pope John Paul II on saint Joseph

Out of Place

Having worked as a sister for 42 years in the United States of America, I was abruptly transferred to a convent of another country where the prayers were said in the French language while they spoke Italian during the day. I could not understand either of the two languages and I was too old to

