



the day the Church was manifested to the world, having been born in the power of the SPIRIT of truth. Nevertheless, Joseph's way of faith moved in the same direction: it was totally determined by the same mystery, of which he, together with Mary, had been the first guardian. The Incarnation and Redemption constitute an organic and indissoluble unity, in which "the plan of revelation is realised by words and deeds which are intrinsically bound up with each other." Precisely because of this unity, Pope John XXIII, who had a great devotion to St. Joseph, directed that Joseph's name be inserted in the Roman Canon of the Mass, which is the perpetual memorial of redemption, after the name of Mary and before the Apostles, Popes and Martyrs.

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

This Month's Heartfelt Matters

- Let us rejoice with all our hearts, because the SAVIOUR is born! No one should be gloomy! Let us remember those people who are neither able nor allowed to celebrate Christmas.



Wishing everyone a blessed, joyful and peaceful Christmas Season!

With a merry heart and with many pre-Christmas greetings and the blessing of Saint Joseph I remain united with you, your

Sister Paula



December 2015

Lay Community of St Joseph

Just One!

„A thousand little lights aflame,
on streets and tracks in line,
a thousand words call out Your Name,
an only one is mine.

One single starlet burning
in the tender night of bliss,
a tiny lantern yearning
to guard Your slumber happiness.

I, too, lit an amazing
candle for your cause,
all my heart is blazing,
uniting mine to Yours.

And with the glow and flame,
so quiet, soothing, bright,
I say to You that single Name,
You, my life's light: JESUS!“

The Guardian of GOD's Mystery

When, soon after the Annunciation, Mary went to the house of Zechariah to visit her kinswoman Elizabeth, even as she offered her greeting, she heard the words of Elizabeth, who was "filled with the HOLY SPIRIT." (cf. Lk 1,41) Besides offering a salutation which recalled that of the Angel at the Annunciation, Elizabeth also said: „And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.“ (Lk 1,45) These words were the guiding thought of the Encyclical *Redemptoris Mater*, in which I sought to deepen the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, which stated: „The Blessed Virgin advanced in her pilgrimage of faith, and faithfully preserved her union with her SON even to the cross,“ and in doing so "preceding" all those who follow CHRIST by faith. Now at the beginning of this pilgrimage, the faith of Mary meets the faith of Joseph. If Elizabeth said of the Redeemer's Mother: „Blessed is she who believed,“ in a certain sense this blessedness can be referred to Joseph as well, since he responded positively to the word of GOD when it was communicated to him at the decisive moment. While it is true that Joseph did not respond to the Angel's "Announcement" in the same way as Mary, he "did as the Angel of the LORD commanded him and took his wife." What he did is the clearest "obedience of faith." (cf. Rom 1,5; 16,26; 2 Cor 10,5-6)

One can say that what Joseph did, united him in an altogether special way to the faith of Mary: he accepted as truth coming from GOD the very thing that she had already accepted at the

Annunciation. The Council teaches: „'The obedience of faith' must be given to GOD as He reveals himself. By this obedience of faith man freely commits himself entirely to GOD, making 'the full submission of his intellect and will to GOD who reveals,' and willingly assenting to the revelation given by Him." This statement is perfectly applicable to Joseph of Nazareth.

Therefore, he became a unique guardian of the mystery "hidden from eternity in GOD" (cf. Eph 3,9), as did Mary in that decisive moment which St. Paul calls "the fullness of time," when "GOD sent forth his SON, born of a Virgin to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons." (cf. Gal 4,4-5) It pleased GOD, in His goodness and wisdom, to reveal Himself and to make known the mystery of His will (cf. Eph 1,9). His will was that men should have access to the FATHER, through CHRIST, the Word made flesh, in the HOLY SPIRIT, and become sharers in the divine nature (cf. Eph 2,18; 2 Pt 1,4).

Together with Mary, Joseph is the first guardian of this divine mystery. Both share in this final phase of GOD's self-revelation in CHRIST – and he does so from the very beginning. Looking at the Gospel texts of both Matthew and Luke, one can also say that Joseph is the first to share in the faith of the Mother of GOD and that in doing so he supports his spouse in the faith of the divine Annunciation. He is also the first to be placed by GOD on the path of Mary's "pilgrimage of faith." It is a path along which – especially at the time of Calvary and Whitsun – Mary will "precede" in a perfect way.

The path that was Joseph's, his pilgrimage of faith, ended first, that is to say, before Mary stood at the foot of the cross on Golgotha, and before the time – after CHRIST returned to the FATHER – when she was present in the upper room at Whitsun,