



# THE ARCHANGEL

St. Michael's School and Parish • Harts Lane • Burghclere • RG20 9JW

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## Great Saint Joseph

**T**he month of March is dedicated to Saint Joseph. It is a fitting time to talk about the man who was chosen as guardian to Jesus and Mary and custodian of the greatest secret kept until it was revealed to the world: the coming of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity into the world of men.

Our Lady's husband is a difficult saint to gauge. Although he appears in the Gospels, we never hear St. Joseph's voice. The evangelists have passed on to us some choice words of our Lady, but St. Joseph is silent.

Imagine the turmoil he must have felt when he discovered that Mary was with child. Imagine his astonishment when he was told that the child was the long-awaited Messiah, conceived of the Holy Ghost, who would save the people from their sins. Imagine his apprehension when he was told to "Fear not", but to marry Mary as planned and to receive into his family God incarnate.

One virtue, in particular, stands out in the meagre record we have Saint Joseph's life: humility. When he saw that Mary was with child, he never doubted her purity. Had he thought that Mary had conceived of man, Joseph, being just, would have denounced her to the religious authorities, according to the injunctions of the Mosaic Law. But he knew Mary too well to doubt her purity and preferred to "put her away privately", which meant to withdraw himself and to leave Nazareth alone and undetected. Mary's reputation would have remained intact. She would have been seen as the poor wife of a wretched husband who had abandoned her at the coming of their first child.

St. Joseph's humility again shines when he is told to take up the incredible burden of becoming the custodian of God's two most loved and blessed creatures: Christ incarnate and His mother. We tend to think of St. Joseph as honoured and privileged, but to his humble soul, such a mission was humanly terrifying. Who was he to keep such close company with God?

How would he ever be able to carry out his duties in a manner worthy of the Divine Majesty and Mary's exquisite comeliness and divine beauty? When we sometimes find ourselves in the presence of tangible holiness, our unworthiness and insufficiency are keenly felt and we instinctively hold back. It took great humility and courage for St. Joseph to take Mary and her Child into his home.

In his humility, St. Joseph neither questioned nor grumbled at the strange, unthinkable paths that Providence laid out before him. He struggled with poverty all his life. His tender love for Mary could only find her a stable to rest during their forced visit to Bethlehem. Without forewarning, he was ordered to take the Child and His mother and flee to Egypt without a moment's delay, not knowing when or how or if they would return. Once settled, he was again ordered to return. And what distress while he sought Jesus "sorrowing", acutely conscious of his "mistake" in thinking Jesus was with family and friends. Mary's sorrow was his as well. One sword pierced two hearts.

Finally, St. Joseph's humility allowed him to bear the burden of long years of manual labour in a mountain village, undoubtedly populated with the usual share of fast-talkers, gossipers and petty overlords who would eventually seek to intern our Lord when He revealed Himself. St. Joseph's acute sensitivity to sin and the coarseness of fallen human nature would have been an unsurmountable trial without a profound sense of his own unworthiness. With humility comes compassion. St. Joseph pitied his neighbour. The astounding efficacy of his intercession today shows that, far from retreating, he sought every opportunity to console and aid his neighbour in need.

May every family of our parish mark this month with a special devotion to St. Joseph. In these difficult times, when so few families commit themselves to his care, he will honour our trust in him with delicate and lavish generosity.

**Fr. John Brucciani, prior**

# The Marriage of the Virgin Mary to St. Joseph

Saint Joseph and the Blessed Virgin Mary were certainly sacramentally married. To say that Christ was born of an “unwed mother” is incorrect. Christ was born into holy wedlock – the most holy marriage in the history of humanity.

Saint Thomas Aquinas, gives us 12 reasons for the fittingness of their bond in holy matrimony. One of the most important was in order that the pregnant Mother of God would not be stoned under the law of Moses.

## It was fitting that Christ should be born of an espoused virgin:

1) First, lest He should be rejected by unbelievers as illegitimate: wherefore Ambrose says on Luke 1:26-27: “How could we blame Herod or the Jews if they seem to persecute one who was born of adultery?”

2) Secondly, in order that in the customary way His genealogy might be traced through the male line. Thus Ambrose says on Luke 3:23: “He Who came into the world, according to the custom of the world had to be enrolled Now for this purpose, it is the men that are required, because they represent the family in the senate and other courts. The custom of the Scriptures, too, shows that the ancestry of the men is always traced out.”

3) Thirdly, for the safety of the new-born Child: lest the devil should plot serious hurt against Him. Hence Ignatius says that she was espoused “that the manner of His Birth might be hidden from the devil.”

4) Fourthly, that He might be fostered by Joseph: who is therefore called His “father,” as bread-winner.

## It was also fitting for the sake of the Virgin:

5) First, because thus she was rendered exempt from punishment; that is, “lest she should be stoned by the Jews as an adulteress,” as Jerome says.

6) Secondly, that thus she might be safeguarded from ill fame. Whence Ambrose says on Luke 1:26-27: “She was espoused lest she be wounded by the ill-fame of violated virginity, in whom the pregnant womb would betoken corruption.”

7) Thirdly, that, as Jerome says, Joseph might administer to her wants.

## This was fitting, again, for our sake:

8) First, because Joseph is thus a witness to Christ’s being born of a virgin. Wherefore Ambrose says: “Her husband is the more trustworthy witness of

her purity, in that he would deplore the dishonor, and avenge the disgrace, were it not that he acknowledged the mystery.”

9) Secondly, because thereby the very words of the Virgin are rendered more credible by which she asserted her virginity. Thus Ambrose says: “Belief in Mary’s words is strengthened, the motive for a lie is removed. If she had not been espoused when pregnant, she would seem to have wished to hide her sin by a lie: being espoused, she had no motive for lying, since a woman’s pregnancy is the reward of marriage and gives grace to the nuptial bond.” These two reasons add strength to our faith.

10) Thirdly, that all excuse be removed from those virgins who, through want of caution, fall into dishonor. Hence Ambrose says: “It was not becoming that virgins should expose themselves to evil report, and cover themselves with the excuse that the Mother of the Lord had also been oppressed by ill-fame.”

11) Fourthly, because by this the universal Church is typified, which is a virgin and yet is espoused to one Man, Christ, as Augustine says (De Sanct. Virg. xii).

12) A fifth reason may be added: since the Mother of the Lord being both espoused and a virgin, both virginity and wedlock are honored in her person, in contradiction to those heretics who disparaged one or the other.



## Powerful Intercession!

Saint Joseph is the Patron of the Universal Church. According to Catholic theologians, Saint Joseph’s ministry is above all other human and angelic ministries. The reason for this is that Saint Joseph belongs to the Order of the Hypostatic Union predestined by God for the Incarnation of Christ. In Greek, the word for the divine Person of Christ is *hypostasis*, and the Order of the Hypostatic Union refers to the way in which the divine Person of the Word assumed human nature.

The Order of the Hypostatic Union refers to those three persons who belong to this ineffable mystery: the Incarnate Christ, Mary the Immaculate Conception, and Saint Joseph the Husband of Mary and Guardian of Christ. The Holy Family *is the Order of the Hypostatic Union*.

In order for the union of the divine nature and human nature (without mixture or commingling) in the divine person of Christ to occur, the Word was made flesh. God therefore predestined that Christ would be born of a human mother. Hence, Mary is part of the Order of the Hypostatic Union in a special way. However, this was not enough. In order to protect the Holy Mother and Christ Child, and also to glorify the dignity of marriage, God predestined that Christ would be *born in wedlock* and be the Son within a true human family. God therefore predestined Saint Joseph to be an intimate part of the hypostatic union. The Incarnate Word ate food because Saint Joseph worked. The Incarnate Word was protected from Herod because Saint Joseph guarded him.

Saint Thomas Aquinas teaches that orders of ministries (either angelic or human) excel in proportion to their proximity to God. Saint Joseph's ministry and order, then, was higher than the ministry of the angels. Saint Joseph's ministry, like that of Mary, is higher even than those of popes, bishops, and priests. This why traditional Catholic Churches have altars to Mary and Joseph as testimonies to this truth. Mary and Joseph, with Christ, stand above all the orders and ministries of the supernatural order.

Saint Francis de Sales teaches that the ministry of Saint Joseph surpasses all others because it exists in a superior order. Moreover, all the theologians that compare the Holy Trinity to the order of the Holy Family confirm that the three persons of the Holy Family belong to an order and ministry above all others. We receive grace chiefly because Christ was made man and this mystery was facilitated in God's plan through the wills and operations of Joseph and Mary.

The prayers of the great Mother of God and Saint Joseph are most powerful and efficacious because these two human persons are closest to and most beloved of our Lord Jesus Christ. Their sanctity made His Incarnation possible. And let us not forget: our Lord and our Lady were subject to St. Joseph, as head of the Holy Family. Any request of his (in answer to our prayers), is as a command to Jesus and Mary who happily grant St. Joseph every prayer he passes on to them.

## A NEW BROTHER

There will soon be a new face in our religious community. Brother Boniface has been assigned to St. Michael's community and will arrive very soon after Easter. He made his first profession in 2014. He is from Minnesota, USA.

We are incredibly privileged to have brothers. They are a rare breed! Brother will provide invaluable help in the sacristy, in the kitchen and around the property. And dear Brother Ignatius will no longer be alone.

**DEO GRATIAS!**

## NEW SINKS FOR THE PRIESTS

A project is underway to improve the priest and guest living quarters. After installing a kitchen and replacing the mouldy carpet in the dining room, we would like to offer real sinks to the priests and brothers. Currently, there are only tiny hand basins installed in each room and bathroom. We would also like to replace the inefficient shower curtains in the priests' quarters with proper shower doors (x4).

All bedrooms urgently need re-painting and some furniture needs replacing.

Please consider helping towards the costs of these renovations. The priests and brothers need modest but functional living quarters.

Sink+taps = £275 each

Shower door = £185 each

Plumbing and decoration is courtesy of Fr O'Hart (advantages of lockdown) and the Maintenance Team.

## NEW BRETHREN



Mr Jonathan Holmes of Burghclere will be received into the Catholic Church during Holy Week. He will make his first communion on Maundy Thursday.

His two sons, John Michael and Sebastien, pupils at St. Michael's, will receive adult baptism at the Easter Vigil.

They will be made catechumens at a preceding ceremony that will take place in the presence of fellow pupils.

**DEO GRATIAS!**

## SUNDAY COLLECTION

The district has produced a simplified way of giving! Just use your phone to read the QR code.



« *Elemosyna ab omni peccato et a morte liberat, et non patietur animam ire in tenebras.* » (Tob. 4:11)

*For alms deliver from all sin, and from death, and will not suffer the soul to go into darkness.*

## GATE PROBLEMS AND REPAIRS

We apologize for the repeated malfunction of the property gate. The cause comes from users activating the emergency red button on the inside of the gate, thus freezing it. This button is to stop the gate from closing.

When exiting the property, please drive up to the line to activate the "open" mechanism.

Sometimes the gate jams. This is due to the rail coming loose and moving. Substantial work is necessary to strengthen the drive entrance and then bolt the rail into reinforced concrete so that the heavy delivery lorries can do no damage! It is a project high on the list and will be expensive.

## ✠ Holy Triduum ✠

### APRIL 01: HOLY THURSDAY

7:00 p.m. Sung Mass and Adoration until midnight.

### APRIL 02: GOOD FRIDAY

*Fasting and Abstinence*

8:30 a.m. Tenebrae

2:00 p.m. Stations of the Cross

3:00 p.m. Mass of the Pre-Sanctified

### APRIL 03: HOLY SATURDAY

8:30 a.m. Tenebrae

10:00 p.m. Paschal Vigil

### APRIL 04: EASTER SUNDAY

7:30, 9:00, 11:00 Holy Mass

## Liturgical Calendar and Mass Times - March

1	Feria in Lent	7:15
2	Feria in Lent	7:15
3	Feria in Lent	7:15
4	Feria in Lent	7:15
5	Feria in Lent 1st Fri - Holy Hour 6:00 PM	7:15 / 19:00
6	Feria in Lent - 1st Sat.	7:30 / 12:00
7	<b>Third Sunday of Lent</b>	6:30, 7:30
	<i>2nd Collection for District seminarians</i>	9:00, 17:00
		18:00 Benediction
8	St. Thomas Aquinas, Confessor & Doctor,	7:15
9	Feria in Lent	7:15
10	Feria in Lent	7:15
11	Feria in Lent	7:15
12	Feria in Lent	7:15
13	Feria in Lent	7:30 / 12:00
14	<b>Fourth Sunday of Lent (Lætäre)</b>	6:30, 7:30
		9:00, 17:00
		18:00 Benediction
15	Feria in Lent	7:15
16	Feria in Lent	7:15
17	Feria in Lent	7:15
18	Feria in Lent	7:15
19	St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary	7:15 / 19:00
20	Feria in Lent	7:30 / 12:00
21	<b>Passion Sunday</b>	6:30, 7:30
		9:00, 17:00
		18:00 Benediction
22	Feria of Passiontide	7:15
23	Feria of Passiontide	7:15
24	Feria of Passiontide	7:15
25	Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary	7:15 / 19:00
26	Feria of Passiontide	7:15
27	Feria of Passiontide	7:30 / 12:00
28	<b>Palm Sunday</b>	6:30, 7:30
		9:00, 17:00
		18:00 Benediction
29	Monday of Holy Week	7:15
30	Tuesday of Holy Week	<u>7:00</u>
31	Wednesday of Holy Week	<u>7:00</u>

## MASS ATTENDANCE REMAINS REGULATED.

Please use the noticeboard booking system to ensure that everyone is spread out across all the Masses. Please also observe as best possible the hygiene requirements of these strange times, out of respect for others.

<https://noticeboard.sanctusmichael.com/stmichaels/>