



THE CARPENTER'S SON

JESUS RETURNS TO NAZARETH, his native place, in the middle of his Galilean ministry. The people of Nazareth have probably heard of reports coming from Capernaum and the towns close by the Sea of Galilee where Jesus had manifested his *exousia* or authority by his wisdom and mighty deeds. Hearing Jesus teaching in the synagogue confirms the reports about him. The crowd appears prepared to grant Jesus honor. But then they proceed to question whether Jesus is really that different. In asking whether Jesus is Joseph's son, the people in the synagogue are questioning how an outstanding teaching could come from one born of a carpenter (Greek *tekton*, artisan working in stone or wood). In a society that places a premium on family of origin, inherited honor, social status, and achievement of family members, Jesus has little or no chance to be recognized as a "prophet" among his fellow townspeople. His riposte of a prophet having honor except in his native place and in his own family cuts them to size as they do to him: outsiders (people not of his own village or family) are better able to judge the honor of the prophet.

Jesus, the carpenter (Mk 6:3) or the carpenter's son, raises the dignity of the person or occupation he has assumed. He raises our humanity by his taking our human condition and the dignity of human labor by working with his hands as an artisan.

Today we honor St. Joseph under whose guidance Jesus learned the trade of carpentry in Nazareth. In the workshop of Nazareth, there was love, learning, and appreciation for

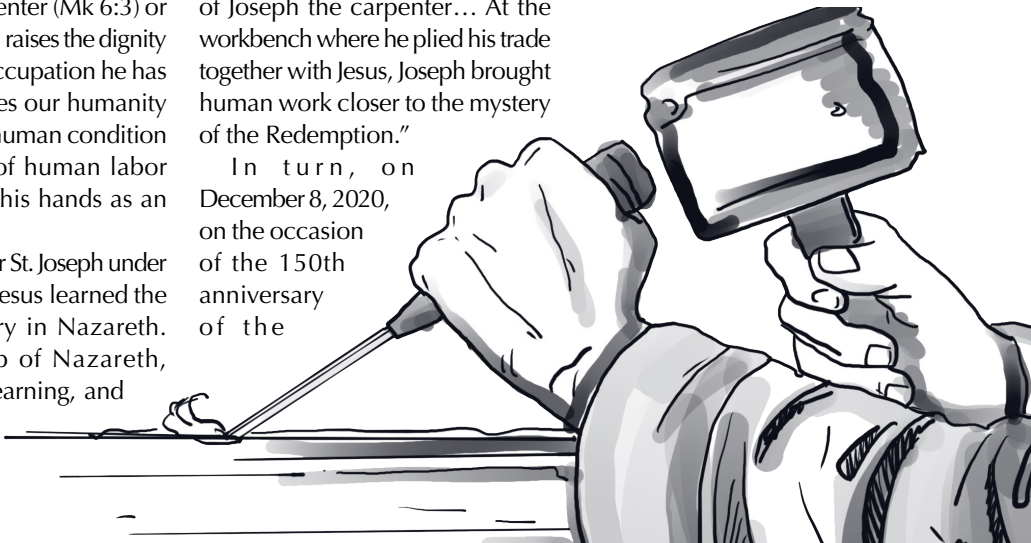
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the humble and difficult work. From this labor, the recent Popes have drawn precious lessons for us.

Pope John Paul II notes in his apostolic letter *Redemptoris Custos*, on St Joseph as "Guardian of the Redeemer": "Work was the daily expression of love in the life of the Family of Nazareth. The Gospel specifies the kind of work Joseph did in order to support his family: he was a carpenter. This simple word sums up Joseph's entire life. For Jesus, these were hidden years, the years to which Luke refers after recounting the episode that occurred in the Temple: 'And he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them' (Lk 2:51). This 'submission' or obedience of Jesus in the house of Nazareth should be understood as a sharing in the work of Joseph. Having learned the work of his presumed father, he was known as 'the carpenter's son.' If the Family of Nazareth is an example and model for human families, in the order of salvation and holiness, so too, by analogy, is Jesus' work at the side of Joseph the carpenter... At the workbench where he plied his trade together with Jesus, Joseph brought human work closer to the mystery of the Redemption."

In turn, on December 8, 2020, on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the

proclamation of Saint Joseph as patron of the universal Church, Pope Francis published his apostolic letter *Patris Corde*, showing how St. Joseph loved Jesus "with a father's heart." Among the greatness of St. Joseph, the Pope lists his being "a working father." Saint Joseph—he explains—was a carpenter who earned an honest living to provide for his family. From him, Jesus learned the value, the dignity and the joy of what it means to eat bread that is the fruit of one's own labor. In our own day, there is a renewed need to appreciate the importance of dignified work, of which Saint Joseph is an exemplary patron. Work is a means of participating in the work of salvation, an opportunity to hasten the coming of the Kingdom, to develop our talents and abilities, and to put them at the service of society and fraternal communion. It becomes an opportunity for the fulfillment not only of oneself, but also of that primary cell of society which is the family. Hence, let us implore Saint Joseph the Worker to help us find ways to express our firm conviction that no young person, no person at all, no family should be without work! (*Patris Corde*, 6).



THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Antiphon

(Ps 128:1-2)

(Recited when there is no opening song.)

Blessed are all who fear the Lord and walk in his ways! By the labor of your hands you shall eat; blessed are you, and blessed will you be, alleluia.

Greeting

(The sign of the cross is made here.)

P—The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All—And with your spirit.

Introduction

(These [or similar words] may be used to address the assembly.)

P—Today, we celebrate the memorial of Saint Joseph the Worker. We honor Saint Joseph for providing for the Holy Family through humble, obedient labor, highlighting that work is a path to holiness. May the celebration serve as a reminder to honor the dignity of labor, whether it is physical labor, a profession, or work at home.

Penitential Act

P—Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries. *(Pause)*

P—Have mercy on us, O Lord.

All—For we have sinned against you.

P—Show us, O Lord, your mercy.

All—And grant us your salvation.

P—May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

All—Amen.

P—Lord, have mercy.

All—Lord, have mercy.

P—Christ, have mercy.

All—Christ, have mercy.

P—Lord, have mercy.

All—Lord, have mercy.

Collect

P—Let us pray. *(Pause)*

O God, Creator of all things, who laid down for the human race the law of work, graciously grant that by the example of Saint Joseph and under his patronage we may complete the works you set us to do and attain the rewards you promise.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

All—Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD



Reading (Gen 1:26—2:3) *(Sit)*

When the Lord God created man and woman, he gave them the power and responsibility to be in charge of the rest of his creatures.

A reading from the Book of Genesis

GOD SAID, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and the cattle, and over all the wild animals and all the creatures that crawl on the ground.” God created man in his image; in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them, saying: “Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that move on the earth.” God also said, “See, I give you every seed-bearing plant all over the earth and every tree that has seed-bearing fruit on it to be your food; and to all the animals of the land, all the birds of the air, and all the living creatures that crawl on the ground, I give all the green plants for food.” And so it happened. God looked at everything he has made, and found it very good. Evening came, and morning followed—the sixth day.

Thus the heavens and the earth and all their array were completed. Since on the seventh day God was finished with the work he had been doing, he rested on the seventh day from all the work he had undertaken. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work he had done in creation.

—The word of the Lord.

All—Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm (Ps 90)

R—LORD, give success to the work of our hands.

1. Before the mountains were begotten and the earth and the world brought forth, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. **(R)**

2. You turn men back to dust saying, “Return, O children of men.” For a thousand years in your sight are as yesterday, now that it is past, or as a watch of the night. **(R)**

3. Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain wisdom of heart. Return, O LORD! How long? Have pity on your servants! **(R)**

4. Fill us at daybreak with your kindness, that we may shout for joy and gladness all our days. Let your work be seen by your servants and your glory by their children. **(R)**

Alleluia (Ps 68) *(Stand)*

All—Alleluia, alleluia. Blessed be the LORD day by day, God, our salvation, who bears our burden. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel (Mt 13:54-58)

P—A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

All—Glory to you, O Lord.

JESUS CAME to his native place and taught the people in their synagogue. They were astonished and said, “Where did this man get his wisdom and mighty deeds? Is he not the carpenter’s son? Is not his mother named Mary and his brothers James, Joseph,

Simon, and Judas? Are not his sisters all with us? Where did this man get all this?" And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his native place and in his own house." And he did not work many mighty deeds there because of their lack of faith.

—The Gospel of the Lord.
All—Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily (Sit)

Prayer of the Faithful

P—Let us pray that by the example of Saint Joseph and under his patronage, we may work to earn our daily bread and to participate in Christ's work of redemption.

R—Lord, prosper the work of our hands.

C—Father, you entrusted to human beings the care of your creation. May we participate in the work of creation by cultivating and safeguarding all the goods of the earth. We pray: **(R)**

C—The Redeemer worked as a carpenter in the workshop in Nazareth. Raise up our humanity and the dignity of human labor. We pray: **(R)**

C—Saint Joseph provided for the Holy Family by his humble and difficult work. Let our work be a daily expression of love for our family and community. We pray: **(R)**

C—In Nazareth, there was a sharing of responsibilities, respect, and love. May the Holy Family be an example and model of human families. We pray: **(R)**

C—Work does not diminish the human person but provides him with dignity and sense of purpose. May all find work to support themselves and their dependents. We pray: **(R)**

P—Father, Saint Joseph was a wise and faithful servant in charge of your household. May we share his commitment, hard work, and satisfaction that call to mind the dignity and importance of work.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.



Presentation of the Gifts

P—Pray, brethren...
All—May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

Prayer over the Offerings (Stand)

P—Accept in compassion, Lord, we pray, the offerings of your family, that under your protective care they may never lose what they have received, but attain the gifts that are eternal.

Through Christ our Lord.
All—Amen.

Preface: The mission of Saint Joseph

P—The Lord be with you.
All—And with your spirit.

P—Lift up your hearts.
All—We lift them up to the Lord.

P—Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All—It is right and just.

P—It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, and on the commemoration of Saint Joseph to give you fitting praise, to glorify you and bless you.

For this just man was given by you as spouse to the Virgin Mother of God and set as a wise and faithful servant in charge of your household to watch like a father over your Only Begotten Son, who was conceived by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Through him the Angels praise your majesty, Dominions adore and Powers tremble before you. Heaven and the Virtues of heaven and the blessed Seraphim worship together with exultation. May our voices, we pray, join with theirs in humble praise, as we acclaim:

All—Holy, Holy, Holy... (Kneel)

Acclamation (Stand)

All—We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer

All—Our Father...
P—Deliver us...
All—For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and for ever.

Invitation to Peace

Invitation to Communion (Kneel)

P—Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.
All—Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Communion Antiphon (Col 3:17)

Whatever you do in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord, giving thanks to God through him, alleluia.

Prayer after Communion (Stand)

P—Let us pray. *(Pause)*
Having fed upon heavenly delights, we humbly ask you, O Lord, that, by Saint Joseph's example, cherishing in our hearts the signs of your love, we may ever enjoy the fruit of perpetual peace.

Through Christ our Lord.
All—Amen.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

P—The Lord be with you.
All—And with your spirit.

P—May the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, (†) and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever.
All—Amen.

Dismissal

P—Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.
All—Thanks be to God.



PRAYER TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Divine Jesus, you have said, "Ask, and you shall receive; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you," behold me kneeling at your feet, filled with a lively faith and confidence in the promises dictated by your Sacred Heart and pronounced by your adorable lips. I come to ask this favor: *(Here silently mention your petitions.)*

To whom can I turn if not to you whose Heart is the source of all graces and merits? Where should I seek if not in the treasure which contains all the riches of your kindness and mercy? Where should I knock if not at the door through which God gives himself to us and through which we go to God? I have recourse to you, Heart of Jesus. In you I find consolation when afflicted, protection when

persecuted, strength when burdened with trials, and light in doubt and darkness.

Dear Jesus, I firmly believe that you can grant me the grace I implore, even though it should require a miracle. You have only to will it, and my prayer will be granted. I admit that I am most unworthy of your favors, but this is not a reason for me to be discouraged. You are the God of mercy and you will not refuse a contrite heart. Cast upon me a look of mercy, I beg of you, and your kind Heart will find in my miseries and weaknesses a reason for granting my prayers.

O Sacred Heart, whatever may be your decision with regard to my request, I will never stop adoring, loving, praising, and serving you. My Jesus, be pleased to accept this my act of perfect resignation to the decrees of your adorable Heart which I sincerely desire may be fulfilled by me and by all your creatures forever.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, I know that there is but one thing impossible to you: to be without pity for those who are suffering or in distress. Look upon me, I beg of you, dear Jesus, and grant me the grace for which I humbly implore you through the Immaculate Heart of your most sorrowful Mother. You have entrusted me to her as her child, and her prayers are all-powerful with you. Amen.

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