<u>Today is the memorial of St Joseph the Worker, established by Pope Pious X11 in 1955, St Joseph is the Patron of ALL working people.</u>

What does the Bible tell us about St. Joseph?

He was a descendent of the House of David. A 'Just' man, according to Matthew's account of Jesus' birth. A carpenter from Nazareth who became the husband of Mary and stepfather to her son, Jesus.

The little that is written about St. Joseph is about his betrothal and subsequent marriage to Mary, following the intercedence of an angel: The Journey to Bethlehem, the birth of Jesus and the following presentation of Jesus in the Temple: the flight into Egypt, before returning to live in Nazareth, and the search for Jesus after visiting Jerusalem who, at 12years old, is found three days later teaching in the Temple!

Lastly, we read in today's Gospel… "Where did Jesus get this wisdom , and these marvellous powers? This is the Carpenter's son, surely?.."

Though Jesus was God's son, these lines from scripture are testament to the quality of guardianship given by his earthly father, Joseph, who provided for his wife and family both physically and spiritually. A man of integrity, who worked hard to provide both income and protection. A man always ready to respond to God's word. A man who bore the trials and joys of parenthood, responding out of a sincere love for God and the special wife and child that he had agreed to cherish as his own.

Through his love of God, love of family and through his work, he fulfilled the vocation to which he had been called. As such, he is a model for all who are working parents/guardians in today's world.

To sum up, we can turn to the words of St Paul in his letter to the Ephesians, in today's Alternative Reading, where you might interpret the word "work" as also meaning "vocation."   He says,

"Whatever your work is, put your heart into it, as if it were for the Lord and not for men. Knowing that the Lord will reward you by making you his heirs. It is Christ the Lord that you are serving."

Chris Burger, 1/5/2020