

# St. Joseph's Family Activities



## 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter 25<sup>th</sup> April – 1<sup>st</sup> May 2021

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### Good Shepherd Sunday

Today we celebrate “Good Shepherd Sunday” which helps us to enter into the mystery of Jesus Christ as our caring shepherd. The reflection is followed by a picture of Jesus the Good Shepherd to colour in and with space to write the names of people to pray for.

On 1<sup>st</sup> May we celebrate the feast of St. Joseph the Worker, and in this year of St. Joseph there are suggestions of how the family can mark this day.

Finally, 1<sup>st</sup> May begins the month of May, the month of Mary. There is a suggested activity there to honour our Blessed Mother.

If you have done any of these activities (and I am not just addressing the parish of St. Joseph's in Malvern) please do feedback to let me know what has been useful – and if you have any ideas of things that could be covered in future editions, please also let me know.

As ever, if you wish to see past copies of these sheets, please go to <https://www.stjosephsmalvern.org/j/> and then click on the dropdown box for past editions.

***There are Four Dimensions of the Faith making sure that Jesus Christ is the centre of everything we do***

# Alleluia! Jesus is Risen

This is one of the earliest known portrayals of Jesus in Christian art and here He is shown as the Good Shepherd – a youthful figure leading and carrying His flock. The picture is from the catacomb of St. Priscilla in Rome.



*The family is the “domestic Church” and if we are not able to gather in person with the parish, it's a good idea to set aside special times to pray with the family, even if it is just 10 mins two or three times a week. These are graced moments. Light a candle and have a few moments' silence and remind everyone that they are in the presence of God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. These times are very precious and even if it is just a few minutes after a meal, it can be a fruitful time. Don't bite off more than you can chew! Start with just a few moments and build up the scope and variety of prayers slowly. Give everyone the opportunity to voice their own prayers as well as reciting traditional prayers.*

**Speaking/Learning the faith  
(which the Church calls  
“professing the faith”)**

**Living it (in Christ) – i.e. the  
choices we make in  
everyday life**

**Celebrating it in the liturgy  
and the sacraments**

**Christian prayer.**

## Gospel for Good Shepherd 25<sup>th</sup> April

John 10:11-18

**Jesus said: 'I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd is one who lays down his life for his sheep.**

**The hired man, since he is not the shepherd and the sheep do not belong to him, abandons the sheep and runs away as soon as he sees a wolf coming, and then the wolf attacks and scatters the sheep;**

this is because he is only a hired man and has no concern for the sheep.

**'I am the good shepherd; I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father;**

and I lay down my life for my sheep.

And there are other sheep I have that are not of this fold, and these I have to lead as well.

They too will listen to my voice, and there will be only one flock, and one shepherd.

'The Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again.

No one takes it from me; I lay it down of my own free will, and as it is in my power to lay it down, so it is in my power to take it up again; and this is the command I have been given by my Father.'

The Gospel of the Lord:

*R/: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ*

## Family discussion on the Gospel

- ✠ Light a candle
- ✠ Make the Sign of the Cross
- ✠ Someone read the Gospel slowly

*John's Gospel is written in beautiful poetry but it not always easy for children to follow so you might like to just read the sections in bold, as the reflection below is based on these.*

**Q: What did Jesus say that He is?** (A: The Good Shepherd).

**Q: What does a shepherd do?** (A: Look after sheep.)

**Q: What kind of animals are sheep?** (A: Various answers possible, but you might like to say that they can be very silly and get themselves into scrapes and need rescuing. They will also follow other silly sheep.)

**Q: How does a shepherd look after sheep?** (A: Various answers, such as gathering them, feeding them, shearing them, leading them with dogs/buggies/helps them to give birth to lambs...).

**Q: What does Jesus say the hired man does?** (A: Runs away at danger.)

**Q: Why does Jesus say this?** (A: to show that He is the one who will rescue us from danger and look after us.)

**Q: Who does Jesus say He knows?** (A: His own (sheep), which means that He knows us.)

**Q: What can we sum up then about Jesus from this short passage?**  
(A: That Jesus leads us, protects us, looks after us, rescues us from danger, He will not run away if there is danger, and He knows each one of us as much as He knows His heavenly Father.)

**Invite everyone to sit still with their eyes closed and imagine they are looking at Jesus and that He is looking at them. In their imagination, invite them "hear" Jesus softly calling their name and to "hear" Him saying the He loves them. End by inviting them to tell Jesus that they love Him too and then pray together,**

***Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and every shall be, world without end, Amen.***

## Jesus the Good Shepherd

- ✠ Write your name and the names of some of your family or friends alongside each sheep
- ✠ Write a prayer in the box below inviting Jesus the Good Shepherd to care for you and everyone you have named.
- ✠ Colour in the picture



1. -----
2. -----
3. -----
4. -----
5. -----
6. -----
7. -----



Dear Jesus the Good Shepherd,

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Amen

# 25<sup>th</sup> April, St. Mark

## St Mark the Evangelist

If today was not a Sunday, we would be celebrating the feast of St. Mark today.

Mark and his cousin Barnabas went with St. Paul on his first missionary journey. Then he became a disciple of St. Peter and was in Rome with both St. Peter and St. Paul. The Gospel of St. Mark is written from St. Peter's point of view. Tradition says that St. Mark went to Alexandria in Egypt where he founded the Church there, and it was there that he died. In 828 his bones were stolen and taken to Venice which adopted him as his patron saint (as well as St. George - see last week's sheet).

Mark's Gospel is the shortest Gospel and may have been the first one written, even though it is second in our list of 4 Gospels. Each year the Church focusses on one of the Gospels in the Sunday readings and this year it is Mark's Gospel (except for these Sundays after Easter, when we are reading John's Gospel).

The main theme of Mark's Gospel is discovering who Jesus is. He begins by saying "The beginning of the Gospel (Good News) of Jesus Christ the Son of God" (Mk. 1:1). The rest of the Gospel is then proving to us the truth of this very first statement. Although Jesus tells people not to tell anyone else when He cures them, at the end when He dies on the Cross, it's in St. Mark's Gospel that we hear the centurion exclaiming, "Truly this man was the Son of God" (Mk. 15:39).

## Who do you say that Jesus is?

In the middle of Mark's Gospel, we come across the episode where Jesus asks the Apostles who He is, and St. Peter answers, "You are the Christ" (Mk. 8:29)

Imagine Jesus is saying this to you,  
"Who am I?"

Write your answer here:

Jesus I say that you are:

Each of the Four evangelists have an animal as a symbol. St. Mark's is a lion. Can you draw a lion here?

# 1<sup>st</sup> May, St. Joseph the Worker

## St Joseph the Worker

The feast of St. Joseph the worker was established by Pope Pius XII in 1955 to emphasise that our work is a wonderful opportunity to share in God's work of creation. Whatever our work is, we are participating in creation - from cleaning the streets to studying the remotest part of the galaxy; from the day-to-day grind of answering phone calls and participating in meetings on zoom, to an active retirement when the work done is not paid, but (hopefully) less stressful.

Work is a privilege and sadly because of the stresses of the last year, there are many people who have lost their jobs and are in danger of losing their self-esteem. It is interesting that when strangers meet, quite often one of the first questions people ask each other is "what do you do?" As if work defines us. This feast is showing that work does not need to define us. St. Joseph is the patron saint of workers because we know what his work was - a carpenter. He was probably not just a "chippy" making furniture as is often portrayed in images but was probably part of the building trade (in modern terms). But he is not defined by his work, any more than St. Peter was for ever a fisherman. Jesus turned St. Peter's work into a glorious vocation, and St. Joseph's work of building and construction was given a new and higher status, that of building the Holy Family and therefore the foundations for the family of the Church.

On the right there is a prayer for workers, or for younger children, you may wish to use the format below which you can adapt for those you know. (There are two versions, one which has been started and another blank one).

## Prayer to St. Joseph For Workers

Joseph, by the work of your hands  
and the sweat of your brow,  
you supported Jesus and Mary,  
and had the Son of God as your fellow worker.

Teach me to work as you did,  
with patience and perseverance, for God and  
for those whom God has given me to support.  
Teach me to see in my fellow workers  
the Christ who desires to be in them,  
that I may always be charitable and forbearing  
towards all.

Grant me to look upon work  
with the eyes of faith,  
so that I shall recognize in it  
my share in God's own creative activity  
and in Christ's work of our redemption,  
and so take pride in it.

When it is pleasant and productive,  
remind me to give thanks to God for it.  
And when it is burdensome,  
teach me to offer it to God,  
in reparation for my sins  
and the sins of the world.

This prayer was taken from the booklet "Devotions to Saint Joseph" by Brian Moore, S.J., printed and published by the Society of St. Paul. Accessed on 21/4/21  
<https://www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-of-the-day/saint-joseph-the-worker>

Prayer for workers by \_\_\_\_\_

**O St. Joseph we turn to you to ask you to support all these people:**

For teachers, St. Joseph, pray for them

For TAs, St. Joseph, pray for them

For those who clean our school, St. Joseph, pray for them

For nurses and doctors, St. Joseph, pray for them

For those who have not work, St. Joseph, pray for them

For \_\_\_\_\_

For \_\_\_\_\_

For \_\_\_\_\_

For \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer for workers by \_\_\_\_\_

**O St. Joseph we turn to you to ask you to support all these people:**

For \_\_\_\_\_

For \_\_\_\_\_

For \_\_\_\_\_

For \_\_\_\_\_

For \_\_\_\_\_

For \_\_\_\_\_

For \_\_\_\_\_

St. Joseph, pray for them

# May, the month of Mary

When I was growing up, we used to have a May queen procession on the first weekend in May (as did a lot of other Catholic communities). One of the girls from that year's First Holy Communion group was chosen to be the May Queen and then we had a procession carrying a statue of Mary, the "May Queen", and the rest of the children would scatter rose petals and flowers leading the way.

Mary and the "May Queen" wore a crown of flowers which the children had made beforehand (I think that paper flowers were used as they lasted longer!) Then we had a great big tea in the parish hall!



## Ideas

If you have a statue of Mary at home, why don't you make her a crown of flowers, and place fresh flowers at her feet during May.

If you don't have a statue, you can print and cut out this picture of a statue and stick it on card, and then make a small crown to go on Mary's head.

Or just decorate the page with flowers, drawn or cut out from magazines.