

# St. Joseph's Family Activities

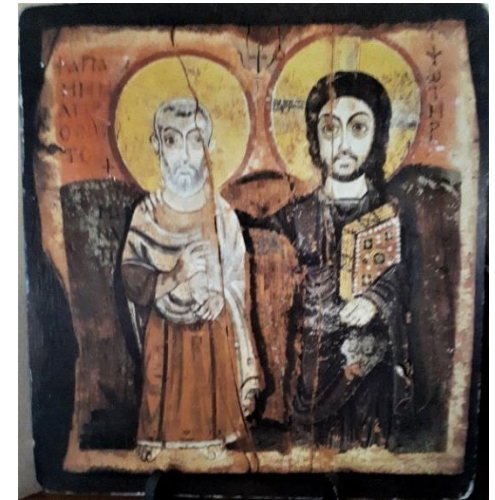
## Week 12 of Ordinary Time

### 20<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> June 2021



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This icon of “Jesus and friend” reminds us that all our life, He is right beside us, with His “arm around us” as depicted here. As we grow in faith, we grow in awareness of the presence of Jesus.



#### 'Even the wind and the sea obey him'

We have such a busy week this week! Our Gospel on Sunday reminds us of two things:

1. That Jesus answers our prayers
2. That Jesus is God.

The 20<sup>th</sup> would have been the feast day of St. Alban England's first martyr if it had not been on a Sunday, and then later this week we celebrate two other English martyrs; St. Thomas More and St. John Fisher. Finally, we celebrate the birthday of John the Baptist.

This all reminds is that our faith is varied and coloured, and that Jesus is at the centre of it all. Let us try to keep Him at the centre of our lives every day this week.

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 our Faith, and the activities all reflect one or more of each of these dimensions.***

*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 minutes 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 Sunday

**Mark 4:35-41**

With the coming of evening, Jesus said to his disciples, 'Let us cross over to the other side.' And leaving the crowd behind they took him, just as he was, in the boat; and there were other boats with him. Then it began to blow a gale and the waves were breaking into the boat so that it was almost swamped. But he was in the stern, his head on the cushion, asleep. They woke him and said to him, 'Master, do you not care? We are going down!' And he woke up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, 'Quiet now! Be calm!' And the wind dropped, and all was calm again. Then he said to them, 'Why are you so frightened? How is it that you have no faith?' They were filled with awe and said to one another, 'Who can this be? Even the wind and the sea obey him.'

The Gospel of the Lord

R/: ***Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ***

## Discussion on the Gospel

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

**Q: What time of day is it?** (A: Evening.)

**Q: What does Jesus suggest that they all do?** (A: Get into a boat and cross the lake.)

**Q: What happens when they are in the boat?** (A: As storm/gale blew up.)

**Q: What was Jesus doing?** (A: Sleeping.)

**Q: How did the disciples react to the storm?** (A: They were afraid that the boat was going to sink.)

**Q: How do we know that Jesus wasn't afraid of the storm?** (A: Because He was asleep.)

**Q: How did Jesus respond to the disciples' fear?** (A: He told the wind to stop, and it did.)

**Q: What can we learn about Jesus from this?** (A: That Jesus will help us when we are afraid/That even if He is "asleep" He hears our prayers.)

**Q: What did Jesus say to the disciples once the storm had stopped?** (A: He told them off for being afraid and for not having much faith.)

**Q: Jesus often told His disciples off for not having enough faith. How can we grow in faith in Him?** (A: Various – reading the Bible/ Mass and the sacraments/praying regularly.)

**Q: What is the last thing that the disciples say in this story?** (A: That even the wind and the sea obey Jesus.)

**Q: What does this show us about Jesus?** (A: That He is all powerful/that He is God/that He is effectively in charge of creation/ that God protects us.)

**Q: What prayer do we regularly pray has a line asking the Father for protection?** (A: The "Our Father" – "Deliver us from evil".)

***Let us finish by praying the Our Father together as a thank you to Jesus for His protection and care for us, especially when the storms of life hit us.***



### Jesus and friend:

This is a copy of the icon of "Jesus and friend" on the first page of these sheets. Look at how Jesus has his arm around His friend, you can see His fingers of his friend's shoulder.

Fill in the blank with a picture of yourself, knowing that Jesus has His arm around you too, protecting you and keeping you safe, especially when you ask Him for His help.

(Notice the toes of Jesus' friend poking out below - can you make your feet line up with the feet in the picture?)

### Write a prayer here:

Dear Jesus, thank you for looking after me.  
Help me especially....

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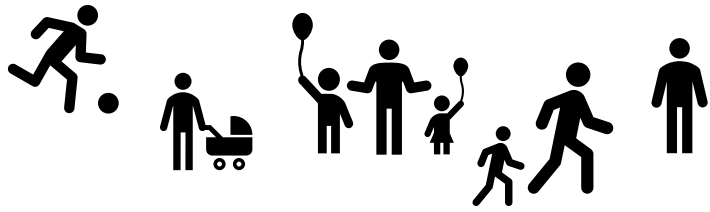
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# 20<sup>th</sup> June, Father's Day

Father's Day has long been associated with the feast of St. Joseph (19<sup>th</sup> March) when it is still celebrated in some Catholic countries, such as Spain. In Europe, in the late 14<sup>th</sup> Century, the Franciscans began to encourage prayers to St. Joseph for fathers, recognising his support for families in general and for fathers in particular.

The secular celebration in June is a more recent invention, where in the USA at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the third Sunday in June was set aside as a day to recognise and honour the work of fathers. Many countries, including the UK, have adopted this date, although Australia and New Zealand celebrate Father's Day in early September.

In our celebrations this weekend, let us not forget the role of St. Joseph; as head of the Holy Family, he is patron of each and every Christian family. For families without fathers, St. Joseph is a lovely saint to honour.

**Write your own prayer to St. Joseph for your Dad:**

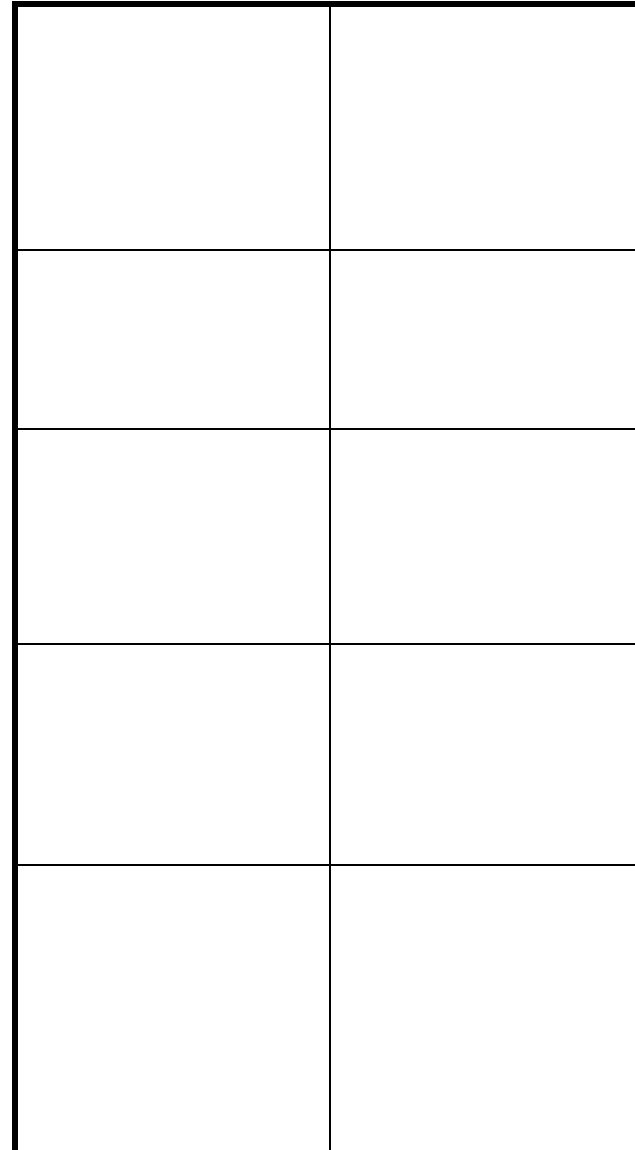
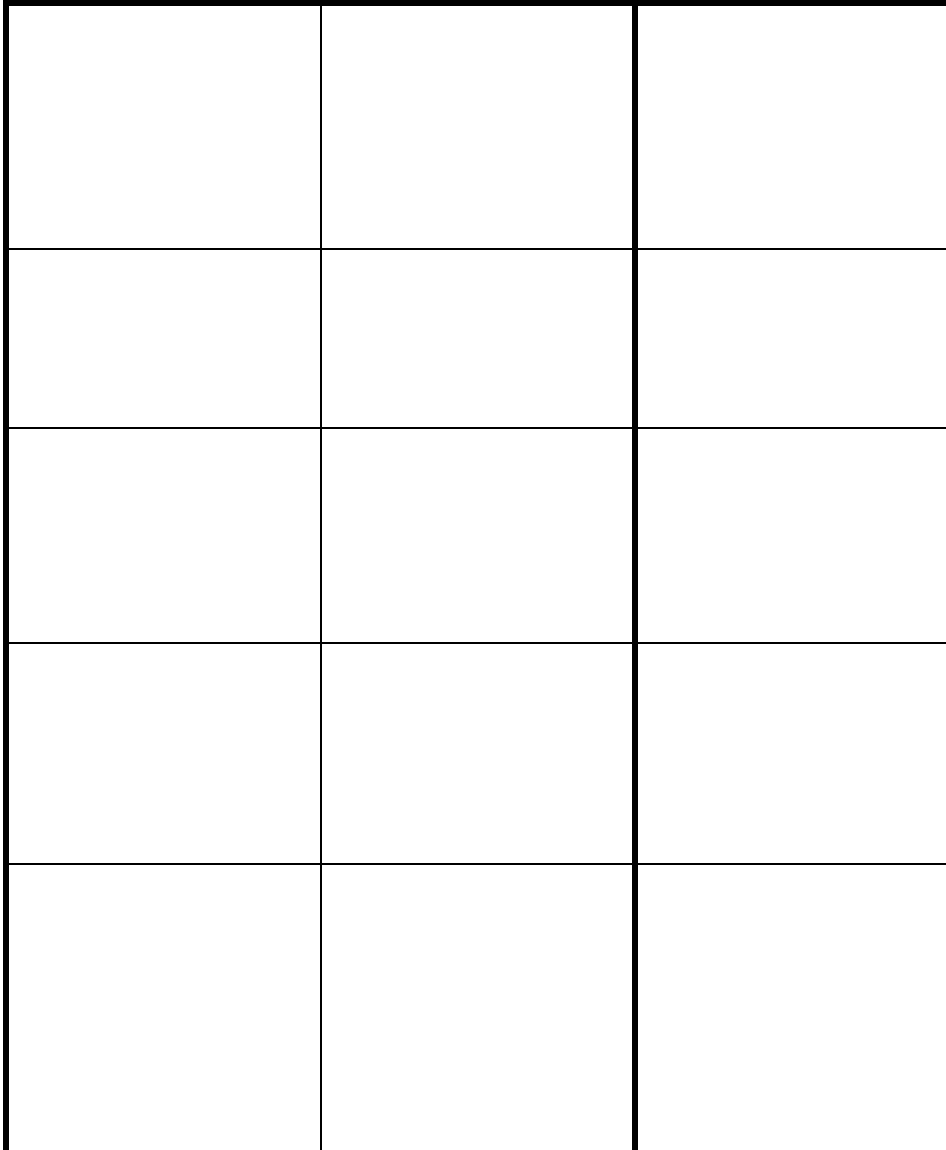
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## **A prayer to St. Joseph for fathers:**

St. Joseph, guardian of Jesus and husband of Mary, you passed your life in loving fulfilment of duty. You supported the holy family of Nazareth with the work of your hands. Kindly protect those who come to you, trusting in your prayers. We especially pray for all fathers and ask that you watch over them and protect them. Teach them to find Jesus near them and to recognise that by his grace alone can they fulfil their duties of being a loving parent. Amen.



Enlarge the stained-glass picture of St. Joseph in the grid on the right.

Draw a "stained glass" picture of your Dad in the left-hand grid. If you don't have a Dad, draw a picture of Jesus, who loves you very much.

# 20<sup>th</sup> June: St. Alban

If today was not a Sunday, we would be celebrating the feast of England's first Christian martyr.

St Alban was the first British martyr. Almost nothing about him is known for certain - even the date of his martyrdom is unknown, and historians suggests that it was in the mid-3rd century. Alban was a Roman who lived in Verulamium and one day he sheltered a Christian who was escaping from persecution. (What does "persecution" mean? - it means being imprisoned, fined or killed for one's faith). Alban was converted and became a Christian and was himself martyred (killed) for being a Christian. Some stories say that he pretended to be the Christian who was escaping, and so was put to death in his place.

His example so caught the imagination of the local people that they built an abbey where he lived, and this abbey was so great that the town was named after it - St. Albans.

Although we don't know a lot of detail about St. Alban, we do know that he suddenly had to make a simple, straightforward decision, and he made the right choice. Easy, we think - obvious what to do. However, we need to practice making good quick decisions. So, when we have a choice, think "what would Jesus do? The more we practice choosing as Jesus would, then the more likely we are to make the right decision at the most important moments.

*Biography and reflection adapted from, [www.universalis.com](http://www.universalis.com)*

**Holy Spirit, give me the grace to always choose to act as Jesus would so that when the important decisions come, I will know how to respond.**

**Amen.**

**St. Alban, pray for us.**

**All the holy martyrs of England, pray for us.**



# 22<sup>nd</sup> June: Sts. Thomas More and John Fisher

## Two more saints who had to make big decisions:

St. Thomas More was a lawyer who was a very important person in King Henry VIII's government. When the Henry VIII's wife, Catherine of Aragon was too old to have any more children and she had only had a daughter, Henry wanted to divorce her to marry someone else so that he could have a son to be king after him. However, the Pope said that Catherine and Henry were legally married and could not be divorced. As a result, King Henry VIII said that the Pope could not control decisions in England any more and he made Himself the head of the Church in England. St. Thomas More said that could not be done as the Pope was appointed by Jesus through the Apostles, and he refused to sign the document agreeing with King Henry. For this he was locked up in the Tower of London and eventually, when the king realised that Thomas was not going to change his mind, he had him executed!

St. John Fisher was also in the Tower with St. Thomas More. John Fisher was the Bishop of Rochester and also chancellor of Cambridge university, a very important position. He was the only Bishop in England to disagree with Henry VIII, and like Thomas More, refused to sign the document and like him had his head chopped off! Just before he was executed, the Pope had made John Fisher a Cardinal, to show his support for him.

Both men show us that sometimes we have to be brave and stand up for our faith. Most of us are unlikely to be in the same position as St. Thomas More and St. John Fisher but we are often challenged to hide our faith and to live like the rest of society.

Here are some quotes from Psalms to help us be strong in our faith. Choose one to cut out and put up this week and try to learn by heart.

God of hosts...

May your hand be on the one you have chosen,  
The one you have given your strength;  
And we shall never forsake (leave) you again  
Give us life that we may call on your name. (from Ps. 80)

God is king of all the earth,  
Sing praise with all your skill.  
God is king over the nations;  
God reigns enthroned in holiness....  
The rulers of the earth belong to God,  
to God who reigns over all. (from Ps. 47)

They are happy who are helped by ... God,  
Whose hope is in the Lord their God,  
Who alone made heaven and earth,  
The seas and all they contain....  
It is the Lord who loves the just  
But thwarts the path of the wicked.  
The Lord will reign for ever,  
Sion's God from age to age. (from Ps. 146)

# 24<sup>th</sup> June: Birthday of St. John the Baptist

Today we celebrate the birthday of the one Jesus called "the greatest of men" (Lk. 7:28). Most saints have only one feast day and that is normally the day they died. Do you remember reading about the Visitation (celebrated on 31<sup>st</sup> May, Lk. 1:41)? What did Elizabeth say about the baby in her womb? (A. That he leaped at the sound of Mary's voice). St. John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Spirit at that moment; he was effectively baptised and cleaned of all original sin then. So, he was born "clean" from all stain of sin (unlike everyone else, apart from Mary and Jesus) and so that is why we celebrate John the Baptist' birthday as well as his death.

When John the Baptist's father, Zechariah, had been told about the fact that his elderly wife, Elizabeth, would finally get pregnant once he returned home from Jerusalem, he was so astonished that he didn't believe the Angel Gabriel. Because of his lack of faith, he was struck dumb and could not speak, but when his son, John the Baptist was born, suddenly he opened his mouth and praised God with a wonderful prayer.

This prayer is prayed every day by people who pray the Church's official prayers (called the Liturgy of the Hours, or the Divine Office).

The Benedictus is a wonderful prayer of praise which starts of by praising God for the work of salvation which Jesus was going to do (remember, at that moment, Jesus was still in Mary's womb), and then goes on to address the infant John the Baptist. However, this part of the prayer we can hear as being addressed to each one of us. How can we go ahead of the Lord (go ahead of Jesus) and prepare them to hear about Jesus?

***Pray the Benedictus with the family today. Take it in turns to read the different stanzas, and then at the end ask that same question.***

## The Benedictus

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel!  
He has visited his people and redeemed them.  
He has raised up for us a mighty saviour  
in the house of David his servant,  
as he promised by the lips of holy men,  
those who were his prophets from of old.

A saviour who would free us from our foes,  
from the hands of all who hate us.  
So his love for our fathers is fulfilled  
and his holy covenant remembered.

He swore to Abraham our father to grant us,  
that free from fear, and saved from the hands of our foes,  
we might serve him in holiness and justice  
all the days of our life in his presence.

As for you, little child,  
you shall be called a prophet of God, the Most  
High.

You shall go ahead of the Lord  
to prepare his ways before him,

To make known to his people their salvation  
through forgiveness of all their sins,  
the loving-kindness of the heart of our God  
who visits us like the dawn from on high.

He will give light to those in darkness,  
those who dwell in the shadow of death,  
and guide us into the way of peace.

*How can I be prepared to meet Jesus every day?*