



St. Joseph (flourished 1st century CE, Nazareth, Galilee, region of Palestine; principal feast day March 19, Feast of St. [Joseph](#) the Worker May 1) in the [New Testament](#), [Jesus](#)' earthly father and the [Virgin Mary](#)'s husband. St. Joseph is the [patron](#) of the universal church in [Roman Catholicism](#), and his life is recorded in the [Gospels](#), particularly [Matthew](#) and [Luke](#).

Joseph was a [descendant](#) of the house of [King David](#). After marrying [Mary](#), he found her already pregnant and, “being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace” (Matthew 1:19), decided to divorce her quietly, but an angel told him that the child was the Son of God and was conceived by the [Holy Spirit](#). Obeying the angel, Joseph took Mary as his wife. After Jesus’ birth at [Bethlehem](#) in [Judaea](#), where the [Holy Family](#) received the [Magi](#), an angel warned Joseph and Mary about the impending violence against the child by King [Herod the Great](#) of Judaea, whereupon they fled to Egypt. There the angel again appeared to Joseph, informing him of Herod’s death and instructing him to return to the Holy Land.

Avoiding Bethlehem out of fear of Herod’s successor, Joseph, Mary, and Jesus settled in [Nazareth](#) (Matthew 2:22–23) in [Galilee](#), where Joseph taught his craft of carpentry to Jesus. Joseph is last mentioned in the Gospels when he and Mary frantically searched for the lost young Jesus in [Jerusalem](#), where they found him in the Temple (Luke 2:41–49). Like Mary, Joseph failed to comprehend Jesus’ [ironic](#) question, “ ‘Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?’ ” The circumstances of Joseph’s death are unknown, except that he probably died before Jesus’ public ministry began and was certainly dead before the Crucifixion (John 19:26–27).