

JOSEPH!

LEST WE FORGET

By LAURENCE MULLIN
Religious News Service

New York — It was only 100 years ago — December 1870 — that Pope Pius IX solemnly proclaimed St. Joseph "the Protector and Patron of the Universal Church."

Considering his position as the man who was married to the Virgin Mary, and the foster father of Jesus Christ, this would seem to be a rather belated recognition of Joseph's role in salvation-history.

But the fact of the matter is that the Gospels — the only reliable source of information about Joseph — are remarkably reticent and sparing of details.

The result was that the cult of Joseph was slow in developing. It began, it seems, in the east in connection with a 4th Century account of his "happy death." The story piously implied that it must have been a happy passing away, because Jesus and Mary, it was said, were by his side.

The cult spread, ever so slowly, to the West through the Middle Ages. But it was not acknowledged universally in the Catholic Church until the 17th Century, and did not receive its crowning stamp of approval until Pius IX made the 1870 proclamation.

According to the Gospel account, although Joseph was of

royal descent in the line of King David, he was, nonetheless, one of the underprivileged poor.

At the beginning of the Christian era, royal descent was no title of rank or wealth. And Luke's account of the presentation of the infant Jesus in the Temple suggests that Joseph was not rich.

The offering he made, "as stated in the law," was the offering of the poor — "either a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons." (Luke 2:24).

Joseph's family belonged to Bethlehem in Judea (Luke 2:4), but he had moved to Nazareth in Galilee to take up his trade of carpenter or builder. (Matthew 13:55).

He married young. At least there is no reason to suppose—despite traditional pictures—that he was above the normal age of 20 to 24 when he married Mary, who would herself be between 15 and 20.

According to Jewish custom, a couple intending to marry would first be "betrothed" (the New American Bible says "engaged.") The betrothal was actually a marriage, but the couple did not take up residence together usually until a year later.

Shortly after Joseph and Mary became "engaged" it became evident that Mary was

pregnant. Since they had not lived together, Joseph was understandably puzzled and confused. He knew that Mary was virginal and pure, yet he could not doubt the evidence of his senses.

"Being a man of principle, and at the same time wanting to save her from exposure (as an adulteress), Joseph desired to have the marriage contract set aside quietly." (Matthew 1:19, The New English Bible) or as the New American Bible puts it, "Decided to divorce her quietly."

However, before he could act, "an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream" (Matthew 1:20) and told him not to be afraid, but to "take Mary home with you as your wife. It is by the Holy Spirit that she has conceived this child. She will bear a son; and you shall give him the name Jesus (Savior) for he will save his people from their sins." (Matthew 1:20-21)

And "Joseph did as the angel had directed him." (Matthew 1:25)

Thereafter, Matthew and Luke mention Joseph in connection with only five more events, up to the time when Jesus was 12. Then both evangelists drop a curtain of silence on him.



Joseph was with Mary when Jesus was born and when the child was presented in the Temple. In response to another directive from an angel, Joseph took his family into Egypt to escape from Herod; and, when Herod died, brought his wife and child back to Nazareth.

The last recorded episode involving Joseph was the agonizing three-day search for the 12-year-old Jesus, after the family had celebrated a feast of the Passover in Jerusalem.

Luke tells the story: "And when the feast was ended, as they were returning the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, but supposing him to be in the company they went a day's journey, and sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintances; and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking him . . ."

"After three days they found him in the temple . . . and when they saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, 'Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been looking for you anxiously.' . . ."

"And (Jesus) went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them . . ." (2:43-51).

From this time on, Joseph disappears from the pages of the Gospel.

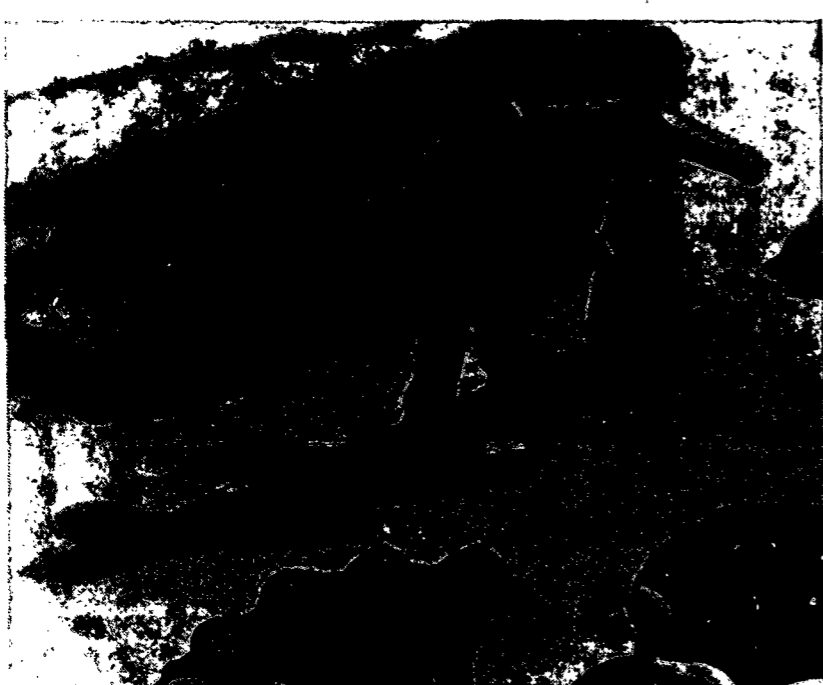
But if the Gospels are sparing of biographical details about Joseph, they limn a sharp outline of his character. Though not a single word of his is recorded Joseph emerges as a strong, patient, courageous man, a man of deep faith and piety. A good husband. A good father . . .

To Catholics, however, Joseph's greatness lies at a deeper level. In every way short of generation, Joseph is seen as the true human father of Jesus Christ—a true guide, protector, provider.

Just so, in the scheme of salvation-history, Joseph continues his role of fostering, protecting and guiding the "body of Christ," the church (Colossians 1:18).

It was this role that Pius IX canonized in his proclamation of 1870.

COURIER / RECIPES



It has to be assumed that the lady of the house has met her holiday baking schedules and is not about to go back into the cookie business at this point. At the same time, it must be allowed that Christmas cookies don't last through New Year's, no matter how many, and woman's work is never done.

So here is a simple recipe that can be complicated through the use of various shaped cutters and colored frostings.

Holiday Cookies

2 cups sifted flour
1 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup corn oil
1 egg plus milk to make
1/2 cup
3/4 cup sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla

Sift flour, baking powder and salt together into mixing bowl. Add corn oil; blend in well with

fork or pastry blender. Mixture will appear dry. Combine egg-milk mixture, sugar and vanilla in bowl. Beat until very light and fluffy. Stir into flour mixture. Chill about 1 hour. Roll out on floured board or cloth until 1/8 to 1/4-inch thick. Cut with floured 2-inch cutter. Place on ungreased cookie sheet and bake in 400°F. (hot) oven until delicately browned, about 9 minutes. Makes 3 dozen (2-inch) cookies.

Decorator's Frosting

1/2 cup margarine (one stick)
1/2 pound confectioners sugar, sifted
Food coloring

Combine margarine and confectioners sugar, beating until smooth. Mix in desired coloring dividing into portions for each color. Press through decorating tube. Makes about 1 1/2 cups frosting. If frosting becomes stiff blend in a few drops water.

COME DINE WITH US



RUND'S
In Rochester it's Runds for good food, pleasant atmosphere and smart entertainment. Joe Cady's 7 piece orchestra playing nightly 9:30 p.m. 'til 1:30 a.m. and feature entertainment in our lounge. 473-3891.

NORMANDIE INN
Old Ridge Rd., Route 104, Sodus, N.Y. 315-483-9524
Serving every day except Tuesday, from noon to 10:00 p.m. Catering to weddings and parties. Continental menu with a French accent. 315-483-9524.

Royal Scot Steak House
657 Ridge Road East, Corner Hudson Route 104 Rochester's newest, most distinctive dining spot featuring Scottish atmosphere, delicious food. Luncheon served Tues. thru Fri., 11:30-2 P.M. Dinners served Tues. thru Thurs. 5 to 10 P.M. Fri. & Sat. 'til 11 P.M. Sundays 4:30 to 9. Open Every Day. Reservations: 342-4220. Ken Purcell entertaining in Scotts Pub.

Buccaneer Where to go? Don't miss the fabulous Buccaneer. The atmosphere is elegant, prices, reasonable, and the food is just right. Daily luncheon specials, a complete dinner menu, serving 'til 1 A.M. Closed Mondays. Party facilities. 288-3065.

Cinelli's Country House
4 miles east of Pulneyville, on Rt. 18 (Lake Rd.) Overlooking Lake Ontario. Unusual decor excellent cocktails superb steaks, seafoods & prime ribs of beef, luncheon 12 to 2 P.M. Dinners 5 to 9. Sat. 'til 10. Sundays 1 P.M. to 8 P.M. Closed Mondays. Accommodate private parties. Your hosts, Margaret and Frank Cinelli. 315-483-9508.

UNCLE JOHN'S FAMILY RESTAURANT
3420 MONROE AVE.
Complete line of pancakes and waffles. Steaks, salads, omelettes, sandwiches, sundaes and milkshakes. Childrens birthday parties. Where everyone meets after church. 381-2850.

NATIONAL HOTEL
Routes 20A and 39 Cuylerville, N.Y. Host to travelers since 1937. Enjoy a meal in this colorful edifice famous for its cuisine, located in historical Genesee Valley, two miles Southwest of Genesee. Steaks, chops, brailed on the open pit. Prime ribs, seafoods, large entree selection. Open weekdays 5 to 11 P.M. Sun. 12 to 9 P.M.

Kar-Mac Manor
Routes 5 & 20 Between Geneva & Waterloo Thruway Exit 42 Roast turkey, Ham and Chicken dinners \$2.85 plus all you can eat from Mr. Mac's Picnic table. Char broiler flaming steaks, lobster tails, seafood—banquets to 500. Daily 5 'til Midnight—Sun. 12:30 'til 10 P.M. 315-789-1305 or 539-8044.

THE VIKING
1485 Mt. Read Blvd. Near Lexington Jack Bayliss Intimate Lounge, Restaurant. Prime Ribs, Surf & Turf, Lobster Tails every day. Luncheon specials. Entertainment nightly. Serving from 11 A.M. lunch and dinner. 458-0420 for reservations. Closed Sunday.

THE MAPLEWOOD INN
3500 EAST AVE. Just a few minutes from downtown Rochester, the Maplewood is one of your favorite family dining spots. Luncheon and dinner specials every week. Orchestra Friday and Saturday evenings 586-9997.

There are... in the short fiction... "The Talk... Little, Brov... is simple;... The simple... impressive

The first... tion is of th... "The Plan... tells of a y... cently mar... who is a... Harvard. S... ly in the... bridge whi... to the co... rather mer... she has a... old Irishw... hler had b... house, an... niece.

Nothing... mood is c... are release... ly yet su... the narra... shared by... reader.

In contr... orate cont... "Brainsy"... Whiskey."... laid in th... of Coolan... school co... brothers.

In "Br... failure tak... the school... ployment... meets ag... years ago... was once... now a r... quite unr... have alw... attitudes... to be the

In "Of... key," anot... time a... painter, c... do the p... who is h... once atte... has unple... brother, v... to remem... is to be... the he... list turns... venge up

These... clever tou... lain can... sloppy wt... neatly to... whole th... work. Bu... is evoke... craftsman... ing, feeli

Brooks... critic for... for 30 y... was resp... and hon... Broadway... since his... has had... of comp... Kerr, an... of dally... kinson p... lacking.

Now... Brooks... called "I... (\$12.50)... York the... tween th... tury and

It will... ested in... living hi... supply u... shows t... ments. A... pronounc... again, it... of speak... ers, dir... atres, nc... and criti

And... written, charm... high st... taste, bu