

Reflections While Walking

Saint Joseph

- Deacon Bob Salvestrini -



Although scripture records none of Saint Joseph's words we learn of him through his dreams and his response to them. In one dream an angel commands him to marry the young pregnant virgin Mary, in another an angel instructs him to promptly take Mary and her newborn baby to a foreign country where they remain until in another dream an angel tells him that it is safe to return to Israel. In each case Joseph obeys without question. He shows complete trust and faith in what the angel sent by God tells him in his dreams.

In my reflections about Saint Joseph, I sometimes wonder what dreams he might have had prior to those recorded in scripture. I prefer to imagine Saint Joseph as a young man starting out in life rather than the elderly image of him portrayed in so much art. Doing so allows me to focus more clearly on the absolute faith and unwavering trust in God he displayed in abandoning the dreams of his youth to follow those that came to him through God's angel. As a young man betrothed to Mary his dreams must have included those of raising a family, children to enjoy, sons to help grow and carry on his business, and emotional and physical intimacy with the woman he loved. The dreams of the young man Joseph must have been shattered when he learned of Mary's pregnancy and a quiet divorce seemed appropriate. God intervenes and sends an angel to Joseph with dramatically different dreams than those he had seen as his future.

The Angel tells him to marry Mary and when her child is born, he is to name him Jesus. Without questioning Joseph does as he is commanded and continues to respond to his dreams from God in a similar manner. Joseph is unique from the many individuals throughout scripture that God gives direction. Abram, Moses, Zechariah, Mary, and others raised questions or doubts when God messaged them, but not Joseph. Joseph's faith was absolute, his trust in God so secure that no questions were needed, he just acted, quickly and decisively.

When have you had to give up a dream of yours and place your faith and trust in one sent from God?