Spirituality
Pencil Preaching



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“Mary said to him, ‘Your father and I have been looking for you with great anxiety’” (Luke 2:49).

Feast of Saint Joseph

2 Sm 7:4-5a, 12-14a, 16; Rom 4:13, 16-18, 22; Lk 2:41-51a

Today we celebrate Joseph's role in loving Mary and protecting and loving Jesus during the boy's most vulnerable, formative years.

Joseph is entrusted with a woman he cannot have and a child who is not his own. He provides a name for Jesus, who will be known as the "carpenter's son." Through Joseph, Jesus receives the tribal affiliation and bloodline of the House of David. The pulse in Joseph's strong arm holding this mysterious baby is essential to the human identity of the Word made flesh.

The so-called "hidden years" of Jesus' upbringing must have held a wealth of stories about the intimate relationship between this good man and the man Jesus was to become. We know Joseph in Jesus, the father in the son. Jesus' parables reveal a knowledge of construction, foundations and hard work, and perhaps an eye for selecting good wood for building his church.

The disciples were like unseasoned lumber whose load-bearing strength and flexibility had to be predicted. Jesus knew the potential of each disciple he chose to be challenged by crisis. The memory of Joseph's firm hands and strong back held Jesus on course to complete his work, even as his own hands were stretched out and held by the nails and his back was pressed against the wood of the cross.

Joseph's eloquence is made greater by his silence. He is a man known for his handshake and integrity, always in right relationship with everyone, fair-minded. wise and just. But he was also obedient to angels and dreams when mystery exceeded rules and grace expanded his conscience.

Jesus was guided by the same vision to fulfill the commandments by validating them with love. He was himself the measure and plumbline that realigned the world to God's original plan.

Pope Francis relies on Joseph to help resolve problems that must be slept on and enlightened by dreams. He places special petitions under a small statue of the sleeping Joseph each night. We are blessed to have such a good man in Joseph as patron and guide for the church.