

Today we celebrate the Solemnity of Saint Joseph. As a solemnity, it “interrupts” the penitential nature of Lent, and we add the Glory to God to our daily Mass, and will recite the Creed after the homily.

The name Joseph means “God will add.” And tradition holds that Joseph was already an old man when he was betrothed to Mary ... and had children from a previous marriage. And so, God added to Joseph’s life in this way.

But the key to understanding Joseph is to understand that Joseph allowed God to add in all areas of his life.

Joseph was a simple village carpenter ... Scripture uses the Greek word *tekton* which means “builder.” He wasn’t wealthy. He wasn’t a scholar. Yet God added to his life, in that he was able to be foster father to the Son of God.

Theologians like to say often that “grace builds upon nature” ... perhaps in honor of St. Joseph - who was a builder, and whose name means “God adds” we should point out that grace adds to our nature.

There is a modern delusion that when we come to Mass, we somehow “add” to God. And I understand how the “me” generation and the narcissism and self-love of this era have infected our own thinking.

Yet if we think that we’re somehow completing God and adding to God by our presence at Mass ... and then complain that we get nothing out of Mass ... it’s simply because we’re not coming with the right disposition.

We must allow God to add to us ... and be ready for the wild ride that entails.

St Joseph is also the patron of the Universal Church. Perhaps we should turn to him to solve all the crises we experience in the Church and on the parish level. He is also the patron of a happy death, because on his own deathbed, he had Jesus and Mary at his side ... and we, too need to have Jesus and Mary on our side.

As we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ ... let us pray that through the intercession of St. Joseph – that we may allow God to add to us ... allowing God’s grace to build on our human nature ... so that we may truly receive the gifts that God has in store for us.