

The Three Josephs



On the left we see Joseph of Egypt. He was the most beloved, youngest son of Jacob whose story is told in the book of Genesis, 37-50. After being sold by his brothers into slavery in Egypt, he eventually found favour with the Pharaoh through his interpretation of the Pharaoh's dream, advising Pharaoh to store grain which enabled Egypt to withstand a long famine. Joseph is depicted holding bread as a reminder that when the people of Egypt lacked food, God provided for them through Joseph.

In Joseph's story we are also reminded of his rejection by his brothers and his forgiveness and love.

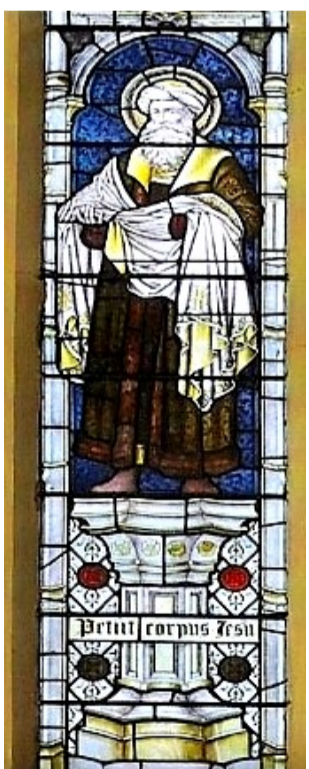
The Latin inscription below Joseph of Egypt reads *Ite ad Joseph* meaning **Go to Joseph** the words of the Pharaoh to the people of Egypt during the time of the famine.



In the middle window we see St. Joseph, holding the lily of purity. The Latin inscription below St. Joseph reads *Joseph Virum Mariae, Custos Domus Dei* meaning **Joseph Spouse of Mary, Guardian of the House of God**. "In the Gospels, Jesus Christ is born as an infant who needs to be fed, and just as the people of Egypt sought food from Joseph, the head minister of Pharaoh's household, so Jesus goes to Joseph, whom God has set over his own household, to receive the necessities of earthly life."¹

"By declaring St. Joseph, the husband of Mary, the universal patron of the Catholic Church, the Catholic Church tells us to go to St. Joseph in our times of need as well."²

In his Pastoral letter on 27th September Bishop Mark invited the people of our Diocese to 'Go to Joseph' during this most challenging of years "in order to ask his prayers and learn from his example."³



On the right we see Joseph of Arimathea, holding a linen cloth. Below him the Latin inscription reads, *Petiit Corpus Jesu*, meaning **[They] petitioned/asked for the Body of Jesus**. This refers to the Gospel of Matthew when Joseph of Arimathea went to Pontius Pilate to ask for the body of Jesus after his crucifixion.

All four Gospels show that although Joseph of Arimathea was a member of the Sanhedrin, he was a believer in Christ. Mark and Luke mentioned that Joseph was looking forward to the kingdom, but Matthew recorded that Joseph "had become a disciple of Jesus" (Matt. 27:57). John told his readers that while Joseph was a disciple, he kept it a secret out of fear of the Jews.

Yet when the time came, Joseph of Arimathea acted in a way that made his faith public. Are you prepared to do the same?