

Statues of Mary and Joseph at Saint Agnes

Hand-carved and painted by Demetz Studio in Northern Italy

Demetz Studio is a fifth-generation family business that specializes in high-quality church art. We worked with a church goods company called Catholic Supply of St. Louis (Missouri) to find the right Mary and Joseph statues for St. Agnes. Our criteria were that our statues be beautiful, consistent with our Catholic tradition, realistic, and timeless in the sense that generations to come would find them attractive. I hope and pray that we were successful! Thank you so much to our benefactors who made these statues possible! What a gift!

The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, Holding Jesus:

- Mary is wearing her signature blue cloak with a red gown underneath.
- The blue represents the Virgin's purity and connotes her royal status.
 - In the Book of Numbers (15:38), the Israelites are instructed through Moses to weave tassels on their garments. Each tassel is to have a blue cord, “and it shall be to you a tassel to look upon and remember all the commandments of the Lord, to do them, not to follow after your own heart and your own eyes, which you are inclined to go after wantonly. So you shall remember and do all my commandments, and be holy to your God” (Numbers 15:39-40). *Mary perfectly embodies the significance of the blue: seeking only the will of God and not her own will. As she says to God through the Angel Gabriel, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; Let it be to me according to your word” (Luke 1:38).*
 - Again in the book of Numbers (4:6), the Israelites were instructed to cover the Ark of the Covenant with a blue cloth. The Ark was a box containing the Bread of the Presence, the staff of Aaron, and the 10 Commandments. These three items represent the priests (bread), the prophet (staff of the prophet Aaron), and the King (who gives laws, the 10 Commandments). *Mary is the Ark of the New Covenant (Revelation 12) who carried within her womb Jesus: the New Bread of Life, the New Prophet, and the New Law Giver.*
 - In Eastern iconography, blue represents transcendence, mystery, and the divine.
 - Blue also represents grace; by the merits of her Son, Mary is “full of grace” (Luke 1:28) and has been since her Immaculate Conception.
 - In the miraculous image of Our Lady of Guadalupe and in her appearances to St. Juan Diego, Mary is wearing a blue cloak.
- The red dress beneath the cloak signifies her humanity and traits connected with motherhood, including love, passion, and devotion.
- Mary stands upon the moon: In Revelation 12:1, John sees the ark of the “new covenant,” the woman who was with Child: “And a great sign appeared in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars...” The moon has no source of light within itself—it is a reflection of the sun. *In the same way, Mary’s purity and perfection is a reflection of her Son.*
- Mary is holding the child Jesus; there is meditation here: *to ponder the tenderness of Christ’s gaze at her, and her maternal gaze at us.*



Saint Joseph, Husband of Mary:

- In the beautiful Litany of Saint Joseph, the second greatest saint has lots of different titles. We invoke him to pray for us by the titles “Spouse of the Mother of God,” “Chaste Guardian of the Virgin,” “Foster Father of the Son of God,” “Model of Artisans,” and “Terror of Demons” to name a few. *Saint Joseph was truly the husband of Mary, but completely chaste by the grace and power of God.*
 - Saint Joseph holds a lily, which represents this purity.
 - As a young man married to the most beautiful woman ever created, yet completely pure and without marital relations, *Joseph models to us true, self-giving love, and the virtue and grace of chastity that made this love possible. He was NOT an old, bald, gray-headed man!*
 - *He remains an intercessor for us for chastity and purity, especially in our tumultuous times!*
- Saint Joseph’s tunic is brown: a sign of his trade and work as a carpenter. (See the prayer below!)
- Saint Joseph’s left hand is across his heart, a posture of humble surrender, a “yes” to God’s plan.
 - The Annunciation of the Angel Gabriel to Mary is well known in the first chapter of Luke’s Gospel, but there was also an “Annunciation to Joseph” in a dream in the first chapter of Matthew’s Gospel (Matthew 1:18-25) to not be afraid to take Mary as his wife. Verse 24 reads: “When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him.”
 - In Matthew Chapter two, Joseph receives another instruction through a dream, and listens promptly.
 - *Saint Joseph is for us a model of readiness to hear the Lord and prompt obedience to God!*



Prayer to St. Joseph, the Worker

By St. Pius X

Glorious St. Joseph, pattern of all who are devoted to work, obtain for me the grace to labor in the spirit of penance, to atone for my many sins; to work conscientiously, putting devotion to duty before my own inclinations; to work with thankfulness and joy, deeming it an honor to use and to develop, by my labor, the gifts I have received from God; to work with order, peace, moderation and patience, without ever shrinking from weariness and difficulties; to work above all with a pure intention and with detachment from self, having always before my eyes the hour of death and the account which I must then render of time poorly spent, of talents unused, of good undone, and of my empty pride in success, which is so fatal to the work of God. All for Jesus, all through Mary, all in imitation of you, O holy Joseph! This shall be my motto in life and death. Amen.