

A number of workmen engaged in constructing a draw-bridge farther down the stream met with difficulties they could not overcome. This was what brought the sheik up-stream just at this moment. St-Joseph, hearing of the trouble, asked if he might go to the bridge. The prince was greatly pleased to escort him to the work, but he had no idea that the visit would mean anything to him.

Now St-Joseph was a carpenter, and it was but a few minutes before he discovered what was the difficulty. He begged to make a suggestion. The Bedouins were directed to attend to his words, and at once they succeeded with the work. The kind old sheik was lavish in his thanks. He moreover entreated St-Joseph to remain till the bridge was finished. St-Joseph consented provided his blessed charge could tarry with him. Of course there was no objection to that.

All the men around now wanted to learn from St-Joseph the art of building. So great was their eagerness that they even forsook their flocks on the hillside. The Blessed Virgin and her divine Son strolling through the valleys, saw the neglected sheep. Jesus said to His Mother: "Thou wilt permit me, Mother, and I shall lead them to drink." Mary replied, "Go, little shepherd."

As the Divine Child climbed up the slope, the scattered flock came bounding towards Him in joy; the lambs frisked about Him and bleated lovingly when He gently touched them with the stick He took up for a shepherd's crook. Day after day for a week, Mary's Son was seen amidst the sheep; and, it was said, tears stood in the eyes of passers-by, who gazed in wonder upon the beauty of the Child and the flock that always kept around Him. Never were sheep so well cared for. Never was shepherd so loved.