



## **The Cherry Tree that helped St. Joseph**

Have you ever heard the traditional English carol, the “Cherry Tree Carol”? Read more about it [here](#).

The Infancy Gospel of Matthew was written around the seventh century and is attributed to St. Jerome. Although it is not part of the Bible, several legends in this text have inspired many people’s imaginations.

One legend speaks of a fruit tree (a palm tree to be exact) that venerates the Blessed Mother. The Infancy Gospel writes of Mary and Joseph traveling to Bethlehem for the census. On the way, Mary stopped to rest under the palm tree that bowed down to offer shade to her.

This story influenced the sixteenth-century British Christmas carol, “The Cherry-Tree Carol.” In the lyrics to the carol, St. Joseph is still confused about how Mary conceived Jesus while remaining a virgin, and when they stop at the cherry tree, St. Joseph angrily tells Mary to have her child’s father pick the cherry. In response, the tree bends down and gives Mary the fruit.

The lyrics of the old carol are:

*O then bespoke Joseph  
With words so unkind,  
Let him pluck thee a cherry  
That brought thee with child.”  
Then bow’d down the highest tree  
Unto our Lady’s hand.*

During this Month of Mary, we discover the many ways our Mother Mary has shaped history. Be on the lookout for Marian products, devotionals, and more to honor our Blessed Mother.