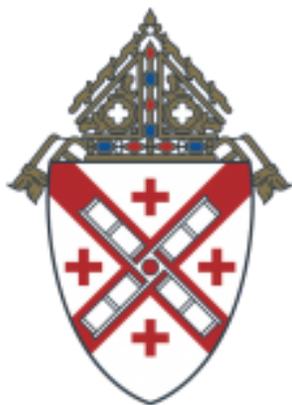
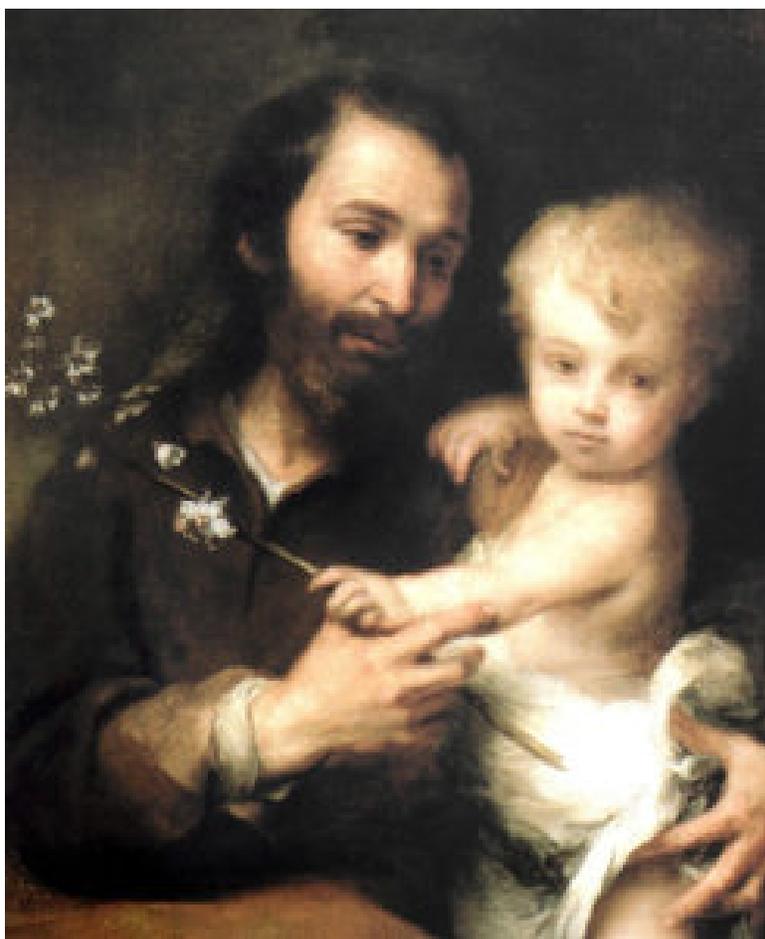


THE YEAR OF ST. JOSEPH

DECEMBER 8, 2020 - DECEMBER 8, 2021
Prayers, Devotions, & Other Resources



ARCHDIOCESE
OF NEW YORK

APOSTOLIC LETTER
PATRIS CORDE
OF THE HOLY FATHER
FRANCIS
ON THE 150th ANNIVERSARY
OF THE PROCLAMATION OF SAINT JOSEPH
AS PATRON OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH

WITH A FATHER'S HEART: that is how Joseph loved Jesus, whom all four Gospels refer to as "the son of Joseph".[1] Matthew and Luke, the two Evangelists who speak most of Joseph, tell us very little, yet enough for us to appreciate what sort of father he was, and the mission entrusted to him by God's providence. We know that Joseph was a lowly carpenter (cf. Mt 13:55), betrothed to Mary (cf. Mt 1:18; Lk 1:27). He was a "just man" (Mt 1:19), ever ready to carry out God's will as revealed to him in the Law (cf. Lk 2:22.27.39) and through four dreams (cf. Mt 1:20; 2:13.19.22). After a long and tiring journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, he beheld the birth of the Messiah in a stable, since "there was no place for them" elsewhere (cf. Lk 2:7). He witnessed the adoration of the shepherds (cf. Lk 2:8-20) and the Magi (cf. Mt 2:1-12), who represented respectively the people of Israel and the pagan peoples. Joseph had the courage to become the legal father of Jesus, to whom he gave the name revealed by the angel: "You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins" (Mt 1:21). As we know, for ancient peoples, to give a name to a person or to a thing, as Adam did in the account in the Book of Genesis (cf. 2:19-20), was to establish a relationship. In the Temple, forty days after Jesus' birth, Joseph and Mary offered their child to the Lord and listened with amazement to Simeon's prophecy concerning Jesus and his Mother (cf. Lk 2:22-35). To protect Jesus from Herod, Joseph dwelt as a foreigner in Egypt (cf. Mt 2:13-18). After returning to his own country, he led a hidden life in the tiny and obscure village of Nazareth in Galilee, far from Bethlehem, his ancestral town, and from Jerusalem and the Temple. Of Nazareth it was said, "No prophet is to rise" (cf. Jn 7:52) and indeed, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" (cf. Jn 1:46). When, during a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Joseph and Mary lost track of the twelve-year-old Jesus, they anxiously sought him out and they found him in the Temple, in discussion with the doctors of the Law (cf. Lk 2:41-50). After Mary, the Mother of God, no saint is mentioned more frequently in the papal magisterium than Joseph, her spouse. My Predecessors reflected on the message contained in the limited information handed down by the Gospels in order to appreciate more fully his central role in the history of salvation. Blessed Pius IX declared him "Patron of the Catholic Church", [2] Venerable Pius XII proposed him as "Patron of Workers" [3] and Saint John Paul II as "Guardian of the Redeemer". [4] Saint Joseph is universally invoked as the "patron of a happy death". [5]

Now, one hundred and fifty years after his proclamation as Patron of the Catholic Church by Blessed Pius IX (8 December 1870), I would like to share some personal reflections on this extraordinary figure, so close to our own human experience. For, as Jesus says, "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" (Mt 12:34). My desire to do so increased during these months of pandemic, when we experienced, amid the crisis, how "our lives are woven together and sustained by ordinary people, people often overlooked. People who do not appear in newspaper and magazine headlines, or on the latest television show, yet in these very days are surely shaping the decisive events of our history.

Doctors, nurses, storekeepers and supermarket workers, cleaning personnel, caregivers, transport workers, men and women working to provide essential services and public safety, volunteers, priests, men and women religious, and so very many others. They understood that no one is saved alone... How many people daily exercise patience and offer hope, taking care to spread not panic, but shared responsibility. How many fathers, mothers, grandparents and teachers are showing our children, in small everyday ways, how to accept and deal with a crisis by adjusting their routines, looking ahead and encouraging the practice of prayer. How many are praying, making sacrifices and interceding for the good of all".[6] Each of us can discover in Joseph – the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence – an intercessor, a support and a guide in times of trouble. Saint Joseph reminds us that those who appear hidden or in the shadows can play an incomparable role in the history of salvation. A word of recognition and of gratitude is due to them all.

1. A beloved fatherThe greatness of Saint Joseph is that he was the spouse of Mary and the father of Jesus. In this way, he placed himself, in the words of Saint John Chrysostom, "at the service of the entire plan of salvation".[7]Saint Paul VI pointed out that Joseph concretely expressed his fatherhood "by making his life a sacrificial service to the mystery of the incarnation and its redemptive purpose. He employed his legal authority over the Holy Family to devote himself completely to them in his life and work. He turned his human vocation to domestic love into a superhuman oblation of himself, his heart and all his abilities, a love placed at the service of the Messiah who was growing to maturity in his home".[8]Thanks to his role in salvation history, Saint Joseph has always been venerated as a father by the Christian people. This is shown by the countless churches dedicated to him worldwide, the numerous religious Institutes, Confraternities and ecclesial groups inspired by his spirituality and bearing his name, and the many traditional expressions of piety in his honour. Innumerable holy men and women were passionately devoted to him. Among them was Teresa of Avila, who chose him as her advocate and intercessor, had frequent recourse to him and received whatever graces she asked of him. Encouraged by her own experience, Teresa persuaded others to cultivate devotion to Joseph.[9]Every prayer book contains prayers to Saint Joseph. Special prayers are offered to him each Wednesday and especially during the month of March, which is traditionally dedicated to him.[10]Popular trust in Saint Joseph is seen in the expression "Go to Joseph", which evokes the famine in Egypt, when the Egyptians begged Pharaoh for bread. He in turn replied: "Go to Joseph; what he says to you, do" (Gen 41:55). Pharaoh was referring to Joseph the son of Jacob, who was sold into slavery because of the jealousy of his brothers (cf. Gen 37:11-28) and who – according to the biblical account – subsequently became viceroy of Egypt (cf. Gen 41:41-44).As a descendant of David (cf. Mt 1:16-20), from whose stock Jesus was to spring according to the promise made to David by the prophet Nathan (cf. 2 Sam 7), and as the spouse of Mary of Nazareth, Saint Joseph stands at the crossroads between the Old and New Testaments.

2. A tender and loving fatherJoseph saw Jesus grow daily "in wisdom and in years and in divine and human favour" (Lk 2:52). As the Lord had done with Israel, so Joseph did with Jesus: he taught him to walk, taking him by the hand; he was for him like a father who raises an infant to his cheeks, bending down to him and feeding him (cf. Hos 11:3-4).In Joseph, Jesus saw the tender love of God: "As a father has compassion for his children, so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him" (Ps 103:13). In the synagogue, during the praying of the Psalms, Joseph would surely have heard again and again that the God of Israel is a God of tender love,[11] who is good to all, whose "compassion is over all that he has made" (Ps 145:9).

The history of salvation is worked out “in hope against hope” (Rom 4:18), through our weaknesses. All too often, we think that God works only through our better parts, yet most of his plans are realized in and despite our frailty. Thus Saint Paul could say: “To keep me from being too elated, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would leave me, but he said to me: ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness’” (2 Cor 12:7-9). Since this is part of the entire economy of salvation, we must learn to look upon our weaknesses with tender mercy.

[12] The evil one makes us see and condemn our frailty, whereas the Spirit brings it to light with tender love. Tenderness is the best way to touch the frailty within us. Pointing fingers and judging others are frequently signs of an inability to accept our own weaknesses, our own frailty. Only tender love will save us from the snares of the accuser (cf. Rev 12:10). That is why it is so important to encounter God’s mercy, especially in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, where we experience his truth and tenderness. Paradoxically, the evil one can also speak the truth to us, yet he does so only to condemn us. We know that God’s truth does not condemn, but instead welcomes, embraces, sustains and forgives us. That truth always presents itself to us like the merciful father in Jesus’ parable (cf. Lk 15:11-32). It comes out to meet us, restores our dignity, sets us back on our feet and rejoices for us, for, as the father says: “This my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found” (v. 24). Even through Joseph’s fears, God’s will, his history and his plan were at work. Joseph, then, teaches us that faith in God includes believing that he can work even through our fears, our frailties and our weaknesses. He also teaches us that amid the tempests of life, we must never be afraid to let the Lord steer our course. At times, we want to be in complete control, yet God always sees the bigger picture.³ An obedient father

As he had done with Mary, God revealed his saving plan to Joseph. He did so by using dreams, which in the Bible and among all ancient peoples, were considered a way for him to make his will known. [13] Joseph was deeply troubled by Mary’s mysterious pregnancy. He did not want to “expose her to public disgrace”, [14] so he decided to “dismiss her quietly” (Mt 1:19). In the first dream, an angel helps him resolve his grave dilemma: “Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins” (Mt 1:20-21). Joseph’s response was immediate: “When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him” (Mt 1:24). Obedience made it possible for him to surmount his difficulties and spare Mary.

In the second dream, the angel tells Joseph: “Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him” (Mt 2:13). Joseph did not hesitate to obey, regardless of the hardship involved: “He got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod” (Mt 2:14-15). In Egypt, Joseph awaited with patient trust the angel’s notice that he could safely return home. In a third dream, the angel told him that those who sought to kill the child were dead and ordered him to rise, take the child and his mother, and return to the land of Israel (cf. Mt 2:19-20). Once again, Joseph promptly obeyed. “He got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel” (Mt 2:21). During the return journey, “when Joseph heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. After being warned in a dream” – now for the fourth time – “he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth” (Mt 2:22-23).

The evangelist Luke, for his part, tells us that Joseph undertook the long and difficult journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem to be registered in his family's town of origin in the census of the Emperor Caesar Augustus. There Jesus was born (cf. Lk 2:7) and his birth, like that of every other child, was recorded in the registry of the Empire. Saint Luke is especially concerned to tell us that Jesus' parents observed all the prescriptions of the Law: the rites of the circumcision of Jesus, the purification of Mary after childbirth, the offering of the firstborn to God (cf. 2:21-24).[15]

In every situation, Joseph declared his own "fiat", like those of Mary at the Annunciation and Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. In his role as the head of a family, Joseph taught Jesus to be obedient to his parents (cf. Lk 2:51), in accordance with God's command (cf. Ex 20:12). During the hidden years in Nazareth, Jesus learned at the school of Joseph to do the will of the Father. That will was to be his daily food (cf. Jn 4:34). Even at the most difficult moment of his life, in Gethsemane, Jesus chose to do the Father's will rather than his own,[16] becoming "obedient unto death, even death on a cross" (Phil 2:8). The author of the Letter to the Hebrews thus concludes that Jesus "learned obedience through what he suffered" (5:8). All this makes it clear that "Saint Joseph was called by God to serve the person and mission of Jesus directly through the exercise of his fatherhood" and that in this way, "he cooperated in the fullness of time in the great mystery of salvation and is truly a minister of salvation." [17] 4. An accepting father Joseph accepted Mary unconditionally. He trusted in the angel's words. "The nobility of Joseph's heart is such that what he learned from the law he made dependent on charity. Today, in our world where psychological, verbal and physical violence towards women is so evident, Joseph appears as the figure of a respectful and sensitive man. Even though he does not understand the bigger picture, he makes a decision to protect Mary's good name, her dignity and her life. In his hesitation about how best to act, God helped him by enlightening his judgment". [18] Often in life, things happen whose meaning we do not understand. Our first reaction is frequently one of disappointment and rebellion. Joseph set aside his own ideas in order to accept the course of events and, mysterious as they seemed, to embrace them, take responsibility for them and make them part of his own history. Unless we are reconciled with our own history, we will be unable to take a single step forward, for we will always remain hostage to our expectations and the disappointments that follow. The spiritual path that Joseph traces for us is not one that explains, but accepts. Only as a result of this acceptance, this reconciliation, can we begin to glimpse a broader history, a deeper meaning. We can almost hear an echo of the impassioned reply of Job to his wife, who had urged him to rebel against the evil he endured: "Shall we receive the good at the hand of God, and not receive the bad?" (Job 2:10). Joseph is certainly not passively resigned, but courageously and firmly proactive. In our own lives, acceptance and welcome can be an expression of the Holy Spirit's gift of fortitude. Only the Lord can give us the strength needed to accept life as it is, with all its contradictions, frustrations and disappointments. Jesus' appearance in our midst is a gift from the Father, which makes it possible for each of us to be reconciled to the flesh of our own history, even when we fail to understand it completely. Just as God told Joseph: "Son of David, do not be afraid!" (Mt 1:20), so he seems to tell us: "Do not be afraid!" We need to set aside all anger and disappointment, and to embrace the way things are, even when they do not turn out as we wish. Not with mere resignation but with hope and courage. In this way, we become open to a deeper meaning. Our lives can be miraculously reborn if we find the courage to live them in accordance with the Gospel. It does not matter if everything seems to have gone wrong or some things can no longer be fixed. God can make flowers spring up from stony ground. Even if our heart condemns us, "God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything" (1 Jn 3:20).

Here, once again, we encounter that Christian realism which rejects nothing that exists. Reality, in its mysterious and irreducible complexity, is the bearer of existential meaning, with all its lights and shadows. Thus, the Apostle Paul can say: "We know that all things work together for good, for those who love God" (Rom 8:28). To which Saint Augustine adds, "even that which is called evil (etiam illud quod malum dicitur)".[19] In this greater perspective, faith gives meaning to every event, however happy or sad. Nor should we ever think that believing means finding facile and comforting solutions. The faith Christ taught us is what we see in Saint Joseph. He did not look for shortcuts, but confronted reality with open eyes and accepted personal responsibility for it. Joseph's attitude encourages us to accept and welcome others as they are, without exception, and to show special concern for the weak, for God chooses what is weak (cf. 1 Cor 1:27). He is the "Father of orphans and protector of widows" (Ps 68:6), who commands us to love the stranger in our midst.[20] I like to think that it was from Saint Joseph that Jesus drew inspiration for the parable of the prodigal son and the merciful father (cf. Lk 15:11-32).

5. A creatively courageous father

If the first stage of all true interior healing is to accept our personal history and embrace even the things in life that we did not choose, we must now add another important element: creative courage. This emerges especially in the way we deal with difficulties. In the face of difficulty, we can either give up and walk away, or somehow engage with it. At times, difficulties bring out resources we did not even think we had. As we read the infancy narratives, we may often wonder why God did not act in a more direct and clear way. Yet God acts through events and people. Joseph was the man chosen by God to guide the beginnings of the history of redemption. He was the true "miracle" by which God saves the child and his mother. God acted by trusting in Joseph's creative courage. Arriving in Bethlehem and finding no lodging where Mary could give birth, Joseph took a stable and, as best he could, turned it into a welcoming home for the Son of God come into the world (cf. Lk 2:6-7). Faced with imminent danger from Herod, who wanted to kill the child, Joseph was warned once again in a dream to protect the child, and rose in the middle of the night to prepare the flight into Egypt (cf. Mt 2:13-14). A superficial reading of these stories can often give the impression that the world is at the mercy of the strong and mighty, but the "good news" of the Gospel consists in showing that, for all the arrogance and violence of worldly powers, God always finds a way to carry out his saving plan. So too, our lives may at times seem to be at the mercy of the powerful, but the Gospel shows us what counts. God always finds a way to save us, provided we show the same creative courage as the carpenter of Nazareth, who was able to turn a problem into a possibility by trusting always in divine providence. If at times God seems not to help us, surely this does not mean that we have been abandoned, but instead are being trusted to plan, to be creative, and to find solutions ourselves. That kind of creative courage was shown by the friends of the paralytic, who lowered him from the roof in order to bring him to Jesus (cf. Lk 5:17-26). Difficulties did not stand in the way of those friends' boldness and persistence. They were convinced that Jesus could heal the man, and "finding no way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the middle of the crowd in front of Jesus. When he saw their faith, he said, 'Friend, your sins are forgiven you'" (vv. 19-20). Jesus recognized the creative faith with which they sought to bring their sick friend to him. The Gospel does not tell us how long Mary, Joseph and the child remained in Egypt. Yet they certainly needed to eat, to find a home and employment. It does not take much imagination to fill in those details. The Holy Family had to face concrete problems like every other family, like so many of our migrant brothers and sisters who, today too, risk their lives to escape misfortune and hunger. In this regard, I consider Saint Joseph the special patron of all those forced to leave their native lands because of war, hatred, persecution and poverty.

At the end of every account in which Joseph plays a role, the Gospel tells us that he gets up, takes the child and his mother, and does what God commanded him (cf. Mt 1:24; 2:14.21). Indeed, Jesus and Mary his Mother are the most precious treasure of our faith.[21] In the divine plan of salvation, the Son is inseparable from his Mother, from Mary, who “advanced in her pilgrimage of faith, and faithfully persevered in her union with her Son until she stood at the cross”.[22] We should always consider whether we ourselves are protecting Jesus and Mary, for they are also mysteriously entrusted to our own responsibility, care and safekeeping. The Son of the Almighty came into our world in a state of great vulnerability. He needed to be defended, protected, cared for and raised by Joseph. God trusted Joseph, as did Mary, who found in him someone who would not only save her life, but would always provide for her and her child. In this sense, Saint Joseph could not be other than the Guardian of the Church, for the Church is the continuation of the Body of Christ in history, even as Mary’s motherhood is reflected in the motherhood of the Church.[23] In his continued protection of the Church, Joseph continues to protect the child and his mother, and we too, by our love for the Church, continue to love the child and his mother. That child would go on to say: “As you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me” (Mt 25:40).

Consequently, every poor, needy, suffering or dying person, every stranger, every prisoner, every infirm person is “the child” whom Joseph continues to protect. For this reason, Saint Joseph is invoked as protector of the unfortunate, the needy, exiles, the afflicted, the poor and the dying.

Consequently, the Church cannot fail to show a special love for the least of our brothers and sisters, for Jesus showed a particular concern for them and personally identified with them. From Saint Joseph, we must learn that same care and responsibility. We must learn to love the child and his mother, to love the sacraments and charity, to love the Church and the poor. Each of these realities is always the child and his mother.⁶ A working father An aspect of Saint Joseph that has been emphasized from the time of the first social Encyclical, Pope Leo XIII’s *Rerum Novarum*, is his relation to work. Saint Joseph was a carpenter who earned an honest living to provide for his family. From him, Jesus learned the value, the dignity and the joy of what it means to eat bread that is the fruit of one’s own labour. In our own day, when employment has once more become a burning social issue, and unemployment at times reaches record levels even in nations that for decades have enjoyed a certain degree of prosperity, there is a renewed need to appreciate the importance of dignified work, of which Saint Joseph is an exemplary patron. Work is a means of participating in the work of salvation, an opportunity to hasten the coming of the Kingdom, to develop our talents and abilities, and to put them at the service of society and fraternal communion. It becomes an opportunity for the fulfilment not only of oneself, but also of that primary cell of society which is the family. A family without work is particularly vulnerable to difficulties, tensions, estrangement and even break-up. How can we speak of human dignity without working to ensure that everyone is able to earn a decent living?

Working persons, whatever their job may be, are cooperating with God himself, and in some way become creators of the world around us. The crisis of our time, which is economic, social, cultural and spiritual, can serve as a summons for all of us to rediscover the value, the importance and necessity of work for bringing about a new “normal” from which no one is excluded. Saint Joseph’s work reminds us that God himself, in becoming man, did not disdain work. The loss of employment that affects so many of our brothers and sisters, and has increased as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, should serve as a summons to review our priorities. Let us implore Saint Joseph the Worker to help us find ways to express our firm conviction that no young person, no person at all, no family should be without work!

7. A father in the shadows

The Polish writer Jan Dobraczyński, in his book *The Shadow of the Father*, [24] tells the story of Saint Joseph's life in the form of a novel. He uses the evocative image of a shadow to define Joseph. In his relationship to Jesus, Joseph was the earthly shadow of the heavenly Father: he watched over him and protected him, never leaving him to go his own way. We can think of Moses' words to Israel: "In the wilderness... you saw how the Lord your God carried you, just as one carries a child, all the way that you travelled" (Deut 1:31). In a similar way, Joseph acted as a father for his whole life.[25] Fathers are not born, but made. A man does not become a father simply by bringing a child into the world, but by taking up the responsibility to care for that child. Whenever a man accepts responsibility for the life of another, in some way he becomes a father to that person. Children today often seem orphans, lacking fathers. The Church too needs fathers. Saint Paul's words to the Corinthians remain timely: "Though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers" (1 Cor 4:15). Every priest or bishop should be able to add, with the Apostle: "I became your father in Christ Jesus through the Gospel" (ibid.). Paul likewise calls the Galatians: "My little children, with whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you!" (4:19). Being a father entails introducing children to life and reality. Not holding them back, being overprotective or possessive, but rather making them capable of deciding for themselves, enjoying freedom and exploring new possibilities. Perhaps for this reason, Joseph is traditionally called a "most chaste" father. That title is not simply a sign of affection, but the summation of an attitude that is the opposite of possessiveness. Chastity is freedom from possessiveness in every sphere of one's life. Only when love is chaste, is it truly love. A possessive love ultimately becomes dangerous: it imprisons, constricts and makes for misery. God himself loved humanity with a chaste love; he left us free even to go astray and set ourselves against him. The logic of love is always the logic of freedom, and Joseph knew how to love with extraordinary freedom. He never made himself the centre of things. He did not think of himself, but focused instead on the lives of Mary and Jesus. Joseph found happiness not in mere self-sacrifice but in self-gift. In him, we never see frustration but only trust. His patient silence was the prelude to concrete expressions of trust. Our world today needs fathers. It has no use for tyrants who would domineer others as a means of compensating for their own needs. It rejects those who confuse authority with authoritarianism, service with servility, discussion with oppression, charity with a welfare mentality, power with destruction. Every true vocation is born of the gift of oneself, which is the fruit of mature sacrifice. The priesthood and consecrated life likewise require this kind of maturity. Whatever our vocation, whether to marriage, celibacy or virginity, our gift of self will not come to fulfilment if it stops at sacrifice; were that the case, instead of becoming a sign of the beauty and joy of love, the gift of self would risk being an expression of unhappiness, sadness and frustration. When fathers refuse to live the lives of their children for them, new and unexpected vistas open up. Every child is the bearer of a unique mystery that can only be brought to light with the help of a father who respects that child's freedom. A father who realizes that he is most a father and educator at the point when he becomes "useless", when he sees that his child has become independent and can walk the paths of life unaccompanied. When he becomes like Joseph, who always knew that his child was not his own but had merely been entrusted to his care. In the end, this is what Jesus would have us understand when he says: "Call no man your father on earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven" (Mt 23:9).

In every exercise of our fatherhood, we should always keep in mind that it has nothing to do with possession, but is rather a “sign” pointing to a greater fatherhood. In a way, we are all like Joseph: a shadow of the heavenly Father, who “makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust” (Mt 5:45). And a shadow that follows his Son.

* * *

“Get up, take the child and his mother” (Mt 2:13), God told Saint Joseph. The aim of this Apostolic Letter is to increase our love for this great saint, to encourage us to implore his intercession and to imitate his virtues and his zeal. Indeed, the proper mission of the saints is not only to obtain miracles and graces, but to intercede for us before God, like Abraham[26] and Moses[27], and like Jesus, the “one mediator” (1 Tim 2:5), who is our “advocate” with the Father (1 Jn 2:1) and who “always lives to make intercession for [us]” (Heb 7:25; cf. Rom 8:34). The saints help all the faithful “to strive for the holiness and the perfection of their particular state of life”. [28] Their lives are concrete proof that it is possible to put the Gospel into practice. Jesus told us: “Learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart” (Mt 11:29). The lives of the saints too are examples to be imitated. Saint Paul explicitly says this: “Be imitators of me!” (1 Cor 4:16). [29] By his eloquent silence, Saint Joseph says the same. Before the example of so many holy men and women, Saint Augustine asked himself: “What they could do, can you not also do?” And so he drew closer to his definitive conversion, when he could exclaim: “Late have I loved you, Beauty ever ancient, ever new!” [30] We need only ask Saint Joseph for the grace of graces: our conversion. Let us now make our prayer to him:

*Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
To you God entrusted his only Son;
in you Mary placed her trust;
with you Christ became man.*

*Blessed Joseph, to us too,
show yourself a father
and guide us in the path of life.
Obtain for us grace, mercy and courage,
and defend us from every evil. Amen.*

Given in Rome, at Saint John Lateran, on 8 December, Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in the year 2020, the eighth of my Pontificate.

Franciscus

SPECIAL PLENARY INDULGENCES FOR THE YEAR OF ST. JOSEPH

To commemorate the 150th anniversary of the proclamation of St. Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church, Pope Francis announced that the Church would celebrate a special year dedicated to St. Joseph beginning on December 8, 2020 and continuing through December 8, 2021. At the Holy Father's request, the Apostolic Penitentiary issued a decree that gives all the faithful the privilege of obtaining the gift of special plenary indulgences during the year of St. Joseph "to perpetuate the dedication of the entire Church to the powerful patronage of St. Joseph, the Custodian of Jesus." The "Decree on the Year of St. Joseph Indulgences" provides that all Baptized Catholics in the state of grace (free from mortal or grave sin) can obtain a plenary indulgence (remission before God of temporal punishment due to sins already forgiven) for themselves or for the faithful departed once per day under the usual conditions, in various ways. The usual conditions prescribed by law to obtain a plenary indulgence are:

- You must have an interior disposition of complete detachment from and rejection of sin, including venial or less grave sins;
- You must go to Confession and also receive the Holy Eucharist; and,
- You must pray for the intentions of the Holy Father.
- These conditions should be completed within a short time (about 20 days) before or after the indulgenced act.

The Decree lists the following means and occasions when a special plenary indulgence can be granted during the Year of St. Joseph:

- Since St. Joseph invites you to rediscover your filial relationship with the Father and renew your fidelity to prayer, a plenary indulgence is granted to those who meditate for at least 30 minutes on the Lord's Prayer, or take part in a Spiritual Retreat of at least one day that includes a meditation on St. Joseph;
- As St. Joseph prompts you to be loyal in the fulfillment of your duties and to practice God's law of mercy, those who follow the example of St. Joseph and perform a corporal or spiritual work of mercy will be able to receive the gift of a plenary indulgence;
- To encourage Catholic families to recreate the atmosphere of intimate communion, love, and prayer found in the Holy Family, a plenary indulgence is granted to families and to spouses who pray the Holy Rosary together;
- As St. Joseph, the "worker of Nazareth", helps you recognize the dignity of work, a plenary is granted to all who entrust their daily work to St. Joseph, and to all believers who, through their prayers, invoke the intercession of St. Joseph the Worker;
- Since the Flight of the Holy Family to Egypt shows you that God is where people suffer, flee, and experience rejection and abandonment, a plenary indulgence is granted to the faithful who pray the Litany of St. Joseph or some other prayer to St. Joseph for the persecuted Church and for the relief of all persecuted Christians;
- To reaffirm to universality of the patronage of the Church by St. Joseph, a plenary indulgence is granted to all the faithful who pray an approved prayer or perform an act of piety in honor of St. Joseph especially on the Feast of the Holy Family (Sunday after Christmas), March 19 (Solemnity of St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary), May 1st (Feast of St. Joseph the Worker), and the 19th of every month and every Wednesday, days the Church traditionally dedicates to the memory of St. Joseph;
- In the context of the current health emergency (Covid-19 pandemic), the gift of a plenary indulgence is extended particularly to the sick, the elderly, the dying and all those who for legitimate reasons are unable to leave their homes. The indulgence is obtained by those who, in a spirit of detachment from all sin and with the intention to fulfill the conditions prescribed by law as soon as possible, pray an act of piety in honor of St. Joseph, consolation of the sick and Patron of a Happy Death, offering to God the pains and tribulations of your life.

LITANY OF SAINT JOSEPH



Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
Christ, hear us. Christ, graciously hear us.
God, the Father of Heaven, have mercy on us.
God, the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy on us.
God, the Holy Spirit, have mercy on us.
Holy Trinity, One God, have mercy on us.
Holy Mary, pray for us.
Saint Joseph, pray for us.
Noble Offspring of David, pray for us.
Light of Patriarchs, pray for us.
Spouse of the Mother of God, pray for us.
Chaste Guardian of the Virgin, pray for us.
Foster Father of the Son of God, pray for us.
Zealous Defender of Christ, pray for us.
Head of the Holy Family, pray for us.
Joseph most just, pray for us.
Joseph most chaste, pray for us.
Joseph most prudent, pray for us.
Joseph most courageous, pray for us.
Joseph most obedient, pray for us.
Joseph most faithful, pray for us.
Mirror of patience, pray for us.
Lover of poverty, pray for us.
Model of workmen, pray for us.
Glory of home life, pray for us.
Guardian of virgins, pray for us.
Pillar of families, pray for us.
Comforter of the afflicted, pray for us.
Hope of the sick, pray for us.
Patron of the dying, pray for us.
Terror of demons, pray for us.
Protector of Holy Church, pray for us.

Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world,
spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world,
graciously hear us,
O Lord.

Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us!

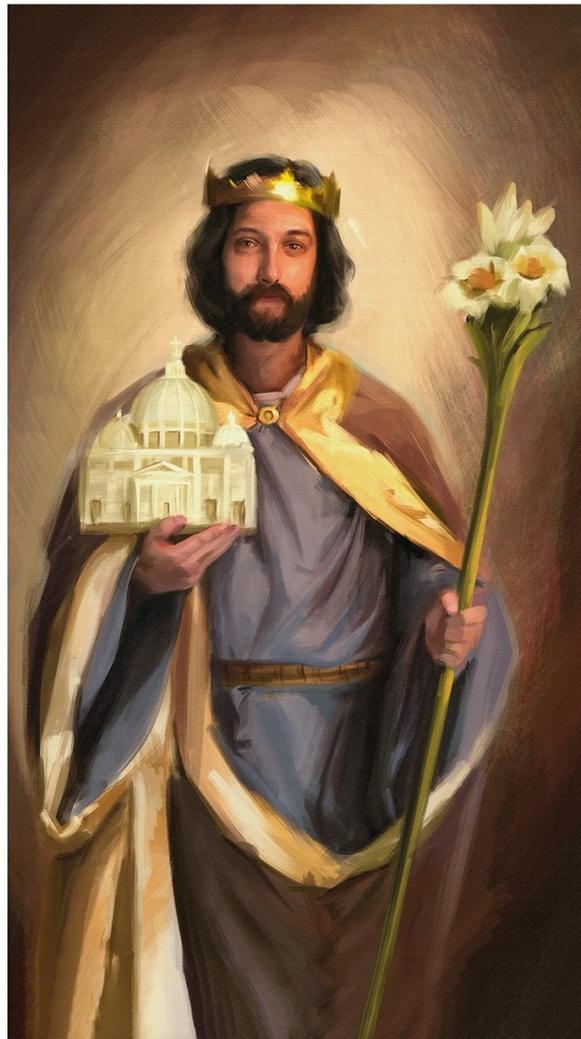
V. He made him the Lord of His household.

R. And prince over all His possessions.

Let us pray:

O God, Who, in Your loving providence, chose Blessed
Joseph to be the spouse of Your most Holy Mother, grant us
the favor of having him for
our intercessor in heaven whom on earth we venerate as our
protector.

You, Who live and reign forever and ever. Amen.



Artist: Gabrielle Schadt (2019). Commissioned by Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC for his book "Consecration to St. Joseph: The Wonders of Our Spiritual Father," St. Joseph is depicted as a loving spiritual father who watches over the Catholic Church with a paternal love.
<https://www.shopmercy.org/st-joseph-patron-of-the-universal-church-10-x-18-canvas-print.html>

PRAYER BEFORE MASS

O Blessed Saint Joseph, happy man whose privilege it was, not only to see and hear that God whom many a king had longed to see, yet saw not, longed to hear, yet heard not; but also to carry Him in your arms and kiss Him, to clothe Him and watch over Him. Pray for us, Blessed Joseph, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray:

God, who has conferred upon us a royal Priesthood, we pray to You to give us grace to minister at Your Holy Altars with hearts as clean and lives as blameless as those of Blessed Joseph, who was found worthy to hold in his arms and with all reverence to carry Your only begotten Son, born of the Virgin Mary. Enable us this day to receive worthily the Sacred Body and Blood of Your Son, and make us fit to win an everlasting reward in the world to come; through the same Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER AFTER MASS:

Saint Joseph, father and guardian of virgins, to whose faithful keeping Christ Jesus, innocence itself, and Mary, the Virgin of virgins, were entrusted, I pray and beseech you by that twofold and most precious charge, by Jesus and Mary, to save me from all uncleanness, to keep my mind untainted, my heart pure, and my body chaste; and to help me always to serve Jesus and Mary in perfect chastity. Amen.

Note: A reminder that Wednesday is traditionally the day we honor St. Joseph. It would be appropriate throughout this year to offer the Votive Mass in honor of St. Joseph when the Liturgical Calendar permits.

SUGGESTED PETITIONS FOR THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER:

1. Through the intercession of Saint Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church, may God bless our Holy Father, Pope Francis, our Archbishop, Cardinal Dolan and all who minister in the Church. May they witness to the love of God in this world by faithfully serving His people. We pray to the Lord.
2. Through the intercession of Saint Joseph, Patron of Families, we pray for the strengthening of all marriages, the safety and well being of all of our children and the protection of our homes from all evil. We pray to the Lord.
3. Through the intercession of Saint Joseph, Patron of our Seminary here in New York. We pray for an increase of vocations to the Priesthood and the Religious Life. May families encourage their children to answer the Lord when He calls. May our young people be inspired by the example of Holy Priests and Religious. We pray to the Lord.
4. Through the intercession of Saint Joseph, Patron of the sick. May all those who are suffering in mind, body or spirit, especially those effected by the Coronavirus, find solace and healing, strength and peace. We pray to the Lord.
5. Through the intercession of Saint Joseph, Patron of the dying. May the souls of all the faithful departed rest in Holy Peace, especially _____: We pray to the Lord.

SUGGESTED CONCLUSIONS TO THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER

O Saint Joseph, whose protection is so great, so strong, so prompt before the throne of God,
we place in thee all of our interests and desires.

O Saint Joseph, do assist us by thy powerful intercession
and obtain for us from thy Divine Son all the spiritual blessings
through Jesus Christ, Our Lord; so that having engaged here
below thy heavenly power we may offer our thanksgiving and
homage to the most loving of Fathers.

O Saint Joseph, we never weary contemplating thee and
Jesus asleep in thy arms. We dare not approach while He reposes
near thy heart. Press Him in our names and kiss His fine head for
us, and ask Him to return the kiss when we draw our dying breath.
Saint Joseph, patron of departing souls, pray for us. Amen.

-or-

(Act of Consecration by St. Bernadine of Siena)

O our beloved Saint Joseph, adopt us as your children
and take charge of our salvation. Watch over us day and night
and preserve us from all occasions of sin. Obtain for us purity
of body and soul, and the spirit of prayer, through your intercession with Jesus.

Grant us a spirit of sacrifice, humility, and self denial.
Obtain for us a burning love for Jesus in the Most Blessed
Sacrament, and a tender love for Mary, our Mother.

Saint Joseph, be with us in life, be with us in death,
and obtain for us a favorable judgement from Jesus, our
merciful Savior. Amen.

-or-

Saint Joseph, just and gentle guardian, in the company
of Jesus and Mary you walked in faith both in the times of
uncertainty and suffering and in the quiet joys of Nazareth.
Guide us in the light and shadow of our lives. We entrust
to you our needs and those of the whole world.
Still our hearts in prayer, bringing us to the bright vision
of Christ's love and peace. Amen.

(Composed by the Carmel of the Incarnation, Beacon, NY)

DEVOTIONAL PRAYERS TO ST. JOSEPH

Compassionate heart of Saint Joseph, pray for us.

Tender and loving heart of Saint Joseph, pray for us.

Holy heart of Saint Joseph, pray for us.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I give you my heart, my soul and my life.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, please assist me in my final hours.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, may I die peacefully in your holy company. Amen.

AN ANCIENT PRAYER TO SAINT JOSEPH

O Saint Joseph, whose protection is so great, so strong, so prompt before the throne of God, I place in thee all my interests and desires.

O Saint Joseph, do assist me by thy powerful intercession and obtain for me from thy Divine Son all the spiritual blessings through Jesus Christ, Our Lord; so that having engaged here below thy heavenly power I may offer my thanksgiving and homage to the most loving of Fathers.

O Saint Joseph, I never weary contemplating thee and Jesus asleep in thy arms. I dare not approach while He reposes near thy heart. Press Him in my name and kiss His fine head for me, and ask Him to return the kiss when I draw my dying breath.

Saint Joseph, patron of departing souls, pray for us. Amen.



MEMORARE OF SAINT JOSEPH

Remember, O most chaste spouse of the Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto you, my spiritual father, and beg your protection. O Foster Father of the Redeemer, despise not my petitions, but in your goodness hear and answer me.

Amen.

PRAYER COMPOSED BY THE CARMELITE SISTERS,
THE CARMEL OF THE INCARNATION, BEACON, NEW YORK
Saint Joseph, just and gentle guardian, in the company of Jesus and Mary you walked in faith both in the times of uncertainty and suffering and in the quiet joys of Nazareth. Guide us in the light and shadow of our lives. We entrust to you our needs and those of the whole world. Still our hearts in prayer, bringing us to the bright vision of Christ's love and peace.

Amen.

NOVENA PRAYER

O glorious Saint Joseph, faithful follower of Jesus Christ, to you do we raise our hearts and our hands to implore your powerful intercession in obtaining from the benign Heart of Jesus all the helps and graces necessary for our spiritual and temporal welfare, particularly the grace of a happy death, and the special grace we now implore....

O guardian of the Word Incarnate, we feel animated with confidence that your prayers in our behalf will be graciously heard before the Throne of God.

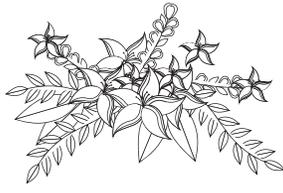
Amen.

V. O glorious Saint Joseph, through the love you bear for Jesus Christ, and for the glory of His Holy Name.

R. Hear our prayers and obtain our petitions.

V. Jesus, Mary and Joseph,

R. Assist us!



FROM THE MARYKNOLL FATHERS & BROTHERS

"St. Joseph was the first to bring Christ into foreign lands when with Mary, they fled into Egypt. So, missionaries appeal to him and not in vain,"

Servant of God, Bishop James Anthony Walsh, M.M.

"St. Joseph, help us live with Jesus and Mary in purity and simplicity."

Servant of God, Fr. Thomas Frederick Price, M.M.

Petitions to Saint Joseph

Saint Joseph, summon Jesus to come to me now in my need.

Saint Joseph, call your Divine Son to comfort me in my sorrow.

Saint Joseph, ask you son, Jesus to teach me how to love God and my neighbor.

Saint Joseph, share your heavenly patience with me in my troubles.

Saint Joseph, ask the Lord to help me overcome the difficulties of my life.

Saint Joseph, teach me to forgive those who hurt me.

Saint Joseph, teach me to look lovingly at Jesus by your side.

Saint Joseph, teach me how to be silent in the Presence of the Lord.

Saint Joseph, teach me to pray with Jesus and Mary.

Saint Joseph, protect me from all evils by calling the Christ Child and His Angels to my side.

Saint Joseph, teach me to be humble and not to seek myself.

Saint Joseph, teach me always to adore God in my heart so that I may see Him with Mary and you forever.

Mary, Queen of Apostles, pray for me and with Saint Joseph ask the Lord to bless me and to heal my inner wounds.

Servants of God, Fr. Thomas Frederick Price, M.M. and Bishop James Anthony Walsh, M.M. with my Blessed Mother, Mary, and my dear heavenly Patron,

Saint Joseph, intercede for me before the Merciful Throne of Jesus, my Lord and my God. Amen.

PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH FROM *Patris Corde*

Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary. To you God entrusted his only Son; in you Mary placed her trust; with you Christ became man. Blessed Joseph, to us too, show yourself a father and guide us in the path of life. Obtain for us grace, mercy and courage, and defend us from every evil. Amen.

POPE FRANCIS' PERSONAL PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH, OFFERED EVERYDAY FOLLOWING LAUDS

Taken from a 19th century French prayer book of the Congregation of the Sisters of Jesus and Mary.

Glorious Patriarch Saint Joseph, whose power makes the impossible possible, come to my aid in these times of anguish and difficulty. Take under your protection the serious and troubling situations that I commend to you, that they may have a happy outcome. My beloved father, all my trust is in you. Let it not be said that I invoked you in vain, and since you can do everything with Jesus and Mary, show me that your goodness is as great as your power. Amen.



ORIGIN OF THE ST. JOSEPH'S TABLE

According to legend, there was a famine in Sicily many centuries ago, people were starving from lack of rain and crops. The villagers prayed to St. Joseph, seeking his intercession to end the drought and provide for their families. Their prayers were answered. In thanksgiving they began the custom of celebrating his feast with the most precious gifts they had, food. Over the years the celebration has taken on many traditions and customs, the most popular is the St. Joseph's Table. The table is filled with breads baked in the shape of carpenter's tools, pastries, especially St. Joseph sfinge and zeppole, oranges and lemons (typically grown in Sicily) and fava beans which were the staple food which saved the Sicilians from starvation during the famine. People usually take a dried fava bean and carry it with them throughout the year as a reminder of God's generosity and bounty in providing food for our families so that we will never go hungry.

Upon the table is placed a statue or picture of St. Joseph or the Holy Family, flowers, especially lilies and candles. The table is blessed by the Parish Priest in the homes of the faithful or in the parish itself during the celebration. Sometimes children are dressed as Jesus, Mary and Joseph and are seated in a place of honor at the table and served first. If a meal is prepared the traditional dish is pasta with sardines and fennel (another Sicilian connection). No cheese is served on the pasta but rather toasted bread crumbs are sprinkled on top which remind us of the saw dust from the carpenter's shop.

Try it, you'll like it!!

BLESSING OF THE SAINT JOSEPH'S TABLE AND THE BREAD



Priest: Today we honor the memory of St. Joseph, the foster-father of Jesus, the husband of the Virgin Mary and the Patron of the Universal Church.

We rejoice of this table which is a sign of God's generous blessings and of our call to serve the poor and hungry. We pray that through the intercession of Saint Joseph, we too might join the great company of the Saints at the banquet of the Lord in the Heavenly Kingdom.

Let us pray:

O God, our loving Father, on the feast of Saint Joseph, the beloved spouse of the Virgin Mary, and foster father of Your Only Begotten Son, we ask Your blessing. In Your providence, bless + this table and this bread, and through the powerful intercession of Saint Joseph, who provided bread for Your Divine Son and food for the poor, sustain us and all of our brothers and sisters on our journey to Your Heavenly Kingdom. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

May the blessing of Almighty God,
Father, Son, + and Holy Spirit,
come upon you and remain with you forever. Amen.

(Sprinkle table and bread with Holy Water)

IF JUST BLESSING BREAD:

Let us pray:

O God, our loving Father, on the feast of Saint Joseph, the beloved spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the foster father of Your Only Begotten Son, we ask Your blessing. In Your Providence, bless + this bread, and through the powerful intercession of Saint Joseph, who provided bread for Your Divine Son, and food for the poor, sustain us and all of our brothers and sisters on our journey to Your Heaven Kingdom. We ask this through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

(Sprinkle bread with Holy Water)



HYMNS DEDICATED TO ST. JOSEPH

By All Your Saints Still Striving

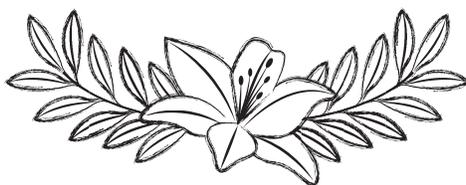
(to the tune of "All Glory, Praise and Honor.")

By all your Saints still striving,
for all your Saints at rest,
Your Holy Name, O Jesus,
forever more be blessed.
You rose, our King victorious,
that they might wear the crown
and ever shine in splendor
reflected from your throne.
All praise, O God, for Joseph,
the guardian of your Son,
who saved him from King Herod
when safety there was none.
He taught the trade of builder,
when they to Nazareth came,
and Joseph's love made "father"
to be, for Christ, God's name.

Hymn to Saint Joseph

(to the tune of "Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days.")

Saint Joseph, God has chosen you to keep His Church from harm,
so hold the Church as once you held the Christ Child on your arm.
Saint Joseph, God has given you all workers for your own.
Teach them to do the best they can with steel and wood and stone.
Saint Joseph, when my death is near come bending by my side,
for Jesus and His Mother bent to help you when you died.
Saint Joseph, when you pray for me, pray to the Three in One,
but talk in human words to Him who let you call Him son.



Great Saint Joseph, Son of David

(to the tune of "Sing of Mary.")

Great Saint Joseph, son of David,
foster father of our Lord,
spouse of Mary, ever Virgin,
keeping o'er them watch and ward.
In the stable thou didst guard them,
with a father's loving care.
Thou by God's command didst save them
from the cruel Herod's snare.

Three long days, in grief, in anguish,
with that Mother, sweet and mild,
Mary, Virgin, didst thou wander,
seeking her beloved child.
In the temple thou didst find Him:
O what joy then filled by heart!
In thy sorrows, in thy gladness,
grant us, Joseph to have part.

Clasped in Jesus' arms and Mary's
when death gently came at last,
thy pure spirit, sweetly sighing,
from its earthly dwelling passed.
Dear Saint Joseph, by that passing,
may our death be like to thine,
and with Jesus, Mary, Joseph,
may our souls forever shine.

ROSARY MEDITATIONS IN HONOR OF ST. JOSEPH

First Mystery: The Role of Saint Joseph

An Angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary, your wife, into your home. It is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a Son and you are to name him Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins." Saint Joseph, enable the Church to bring Jesus and His salvation to all peoples.

Second Mystery: The Faith of Saint Joseph

When Joseph awoke he did as the Angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home. Saint Joseph, help married couples and families to live in love and reverence for one another.

Third Mystery: The Obedience of Saint Joseph

Joseph went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth to Judea, to the city of David that is called Bethlehem, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with Child. While they were there, she gave birth to her first born Son. Saint Joseph, protect the homeless, the helpless and the unborn and obtain peace for cities, nations, the world.

Fourth Mystery: The Courage of Saint Joseph

The Angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the Child and His mother, flee to Egypt and stay there until I tell you." Joseph rose and took the Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt. Saint Joseph, be with the fearful and all in need, suffering pain and trouble.

Fifth Mystery: The Fidelity of Saint Joseph

The Angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph and said, "Rise, take the Child and His mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the Child's life are dead." He rose, took the Child and His mother and went to the land of Israel. Saint Joseph, intercede with Them for all our intentions. Amen.

RESOURCES

(A short list to start, there are many other good books available.)

1. Consecration to St. Joseph, The Wonders of Our Spiritual Father by Fr. Donald H. Calloway, MIC
Marian Press, Stockbridge, Mass
33 Day Preparation for the Consecration

Begin	Day of Consecration
February 15	March 19
March 30	May 1

2. Devotions to Saint Joseph
pamphlet available from the Daughters of St. Paul

3. Favorite Prayers to St. Joseph
pamphlet available from Tan Books and Publishers

4. The Mystery of Joseph by Fr. Marie-Dominique Philippe, OP
Zaccheus Press, Bethesda, Maryland

5. Meet Your Spiritual Father by Dr. Mark Miravalle
Lighthouse Catholic Media - Marian Press, Stockbridge, Mass

6. Joseph, The Man Who Raised Jesus by Fr. Gary Caster
Servant Books, Cincinnati, Ohio

7. Joseph of Nazareth by Fr. Federico Suarez
Scepter Publishers, New York



ARCHDIOCESAN CONSECRATION



On March 19, His Eminence plans to consecrate the Archdiocese of New York to St. Joseph. Father Matthew Ernest is preparing for us the prayers that the Cardinal will use on this occasion so that all in our parishes may join in the Act of Consecration on the same day and perhaps at the same hour. When this is available it will be sent by Archdiocesan email.

On May 1, perhaps on this feast of St. Joseph, the Worker, parishes may plan a special blessing, prayer service or Mass, asking God's blessings through St. Joseph's intercession for all workers, perhaps with an emphasis on the migrant workers here in our Archdiocese.

LENT IN THE YEAR OF ST. JOSEPH

Celebrating the Year of St. Joseph during the Season of Lent gives us the opportunity to practice the corporal works of mercy.

St. Joseph provided for the Holy Family of Nazareth, he continues to provide for the needs of the Church, especially for the poor among us. During Lent, let us honor St. Joseph by collecting food for the needy. Donate to your parish or local food pantries.

Donate your time during the distribution of these food items.

If these corporal works of mercy are done in honor of St. Joseph, you may obtain the special plenary indulgence.

