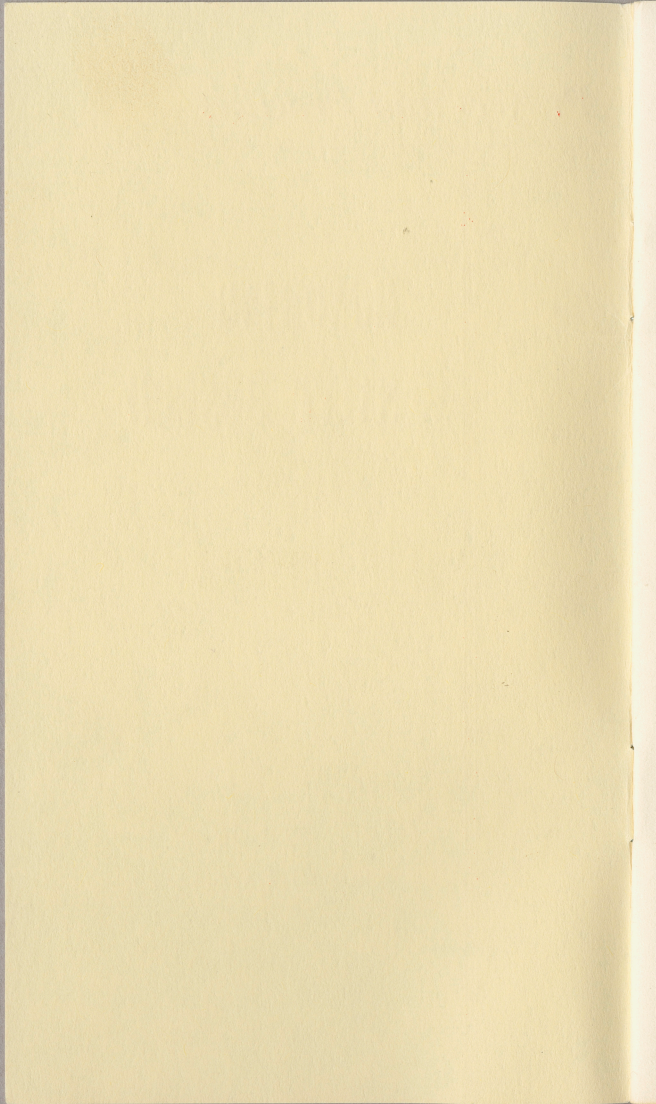


Prayers and Practices

**HONORING
SAINT JOSEPH**

Edited by
JAMES J. DAVIS, O.P.



INTRODUCTION

Prayers and Practices

HONORING

SAINT JOSEPH

SPEC
CAPAM

Prayers and Practices

HONORING

SAINT JOSEPH

INTRODUCTION

Growing Devotion

In the last few hundred years devotion to St. Joseph has been growing very rapidly among the faithful in all parts of the world. One reason for this is that more and more people are coming to recognize the true greatness of St. Joseph. Most Christians no longer believe the fictional stories about St. Joseph being a tottering old widower of 80 or 90 years of age when he married Mary. As far back as the fourth century St. Jerome condemned these stories as insane lies, but, sad to say, these errors are still believed by a few, for we still see some statues and holy pictures of St. Joseph as an old, bent man with a thick white beard—hardly one to do carpentry work or to protect Mary and Jesus!

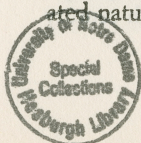
Virgin

The truth of the matter, as thinking Christians now realize, is that St. Joseph was about the same age as Mary, that is, about 18 or 19, for that was the customary marriage age in Palestine at that time. Like his wife, Joseph was a virgin; indeed, in the thirteenth century

St. Thomas Aquinas believed that Joseph and Mary had both vowed virginity. They were truly married, for they made the usual marriage promises to each other. For a supernatural reason, however, both made an additional promise to God not to ask for their marriage rights. Thus, there was no inconsistency in their being truly married and yet remaining virgins.

Greatest After Mary

There is no doubt that Mary loved her husband very much, and in her great love for him she prayed for him and obtained many great graces for him. Chosen by God to act as father of Jesus in so many ways, Joseph was given great graces by God—more than any other man. St. Joseph, therefore, is the greatest of the saints after Mary. As Pope Leo XIII said: "He indeed was the husband of Mary and the father, as was supposed, of Jesus Christ. These are the sources of all his dignity, grace, holiness, and glory. The dignity of the Mother of God is certainly so sublime that nothing can surpass it. None the less, since the bond of marriage existed between Joseph and the Blessed Virgin, there can be no doubt that more than any other person he approached that supereminent dignity by which the Mother of God is raised far above all created natures" (Encyc. *Quamquam Pluries*).



Devotion of the Saints

Many of the saints had devotion to St. Joseph, and prayed to him. For instance, St. Francis de Sales used to live on bread and water on the day before the feast of St. Joseph, in order to prepare himself better for the solemn celebration of the feast day.

St. John Eudes prayed: "O great saint, we offer you our hearts; unite them with yours and with the hearts of Jesus and Mary, begging them to make this union inviolate and eternal."

When the great Jesuit, Blessed Claude de la Colombiere, was only five years ordained he preached a sermon on March 19 in which he reminded his listeners that St. Joseph, being the beloved husband of Mary, had the greatest claim to her love. The great zeal of Mary during the time of her marriage was centered on sanctifying her husband. The order of charity required that she make him the principal object of her love, after God of course. The great fire of Mary's love, capable of embracing the whole earth, had only the heart of Joseph to warm and consume for many years. Blessed Claude added: "What care must she not have taken to inflame the heart of Joseph with the love of God!" We should then, pray to this man who is loved so much by Jesus and Mary.

St. Louis Marie de Montfort and St. The-

rese of Lisieux composed hymns in honor of St. Joseph. The great Franciscan preacher, St. Leonard of Port Maurice, once said in a sermon: "God willed that persons in every state, in every condition, should have something in common with St. Joseph, so that all would have special confidence in his protection, all would have recourse to him as their particular advocate and as a universal intercessor—seeing that in the house of Jesus and Mary the other saints ask, whereas Joseph orders. The others pray, and Joseph commands, and in commanding he obtains what he wants. Also religious in all orders must have a great devotion to St. Joseph and recognize him as their founder, since in the opinion of some people he is the first who made the holy vows. Priests, you find at the head of your hierarchy St. Joseph, who first administered the patrimony of Jesus Christ; you should have special devotion to him. Lay people, you can also count St. Joseph in your ranks; he lived a virgin, it is true, but married, and outside the temple, although his home was a shrine. The great and noble should be devoted to St. Joseph, since he came from the most illustrious royal blood. And you men, working men, poor and needy, you should have confidence in St. Joseph who lived like you in a workshop, earned his living by the labor of his hands and the sweat of his brow. All, in a

word, living and dead, must hope in St. Joseph, who lived and died with Him who is Life. He is the universal advocate of all Christians. All Christians belong to St. Joseph because Jesus and Mary belonged to him. Even more, infidels and barbarians themselves should have some confidence in St. Joseph, for he protected them in a special way during the time of his exile. One must be worse than an infidel, worse than a barbarian, not to have devotion to St. Joseph."

Most famous of all the saintly devotees of St. Joseph is St. Teresa of Avila. She dedicated to St. Joseph many of the Carmelite monasteries she founded. She once wrote: "I wish I could persuade everybody to be devoted to this glorious saint, for long experience has taught me what blessings he can obtain from God for us. Of all the people I have known with true devotion and special veneration for St. Joseph, not one has failed to advance in virtue. He helps those who turn to him to make real progress. For several years now, I believe, I have always made some request to him on his feast day, and it has always been granted; and when my request is not quite what it ought to be, he puts it right for my greater benefit."

Popes

The popes, too, have encouraged devotion to St. Joseph because of his high position in

heaven. Pius IX in 1870 declared St. Joseph the Patron of the Universal Church. Leo XIII, St. Pius X and Benedict XV in encyclicals and other documents encouraged Catholics to pray to St. Joseph. Pius XI placed the crusade against Communism under the patronage of St. Joseph. Pius XII, among many things, composed a prayer to St. Joseph (just seven months before his death), and he instituted the feast of St. Joseph the Worker. Pope John XXIII has several times pointed out that his baptismal name was Joseph, and he once remarked that he had thought of taking the name of "Pope Joseph," but did not do so because there was no precedent. Pope John told an audience that St. Joseph teaches us always to say little and do much, because all must work.

Dominicans

Since its very foundation, almost 800 years ago, the Order of Preachers has done much to spread devotion to St. Joseph in a characteristically Dominican way. The outstanding American authority, Fr. Francis L. Filas, S.J. wrote: "The Dominicans played an important role, although their influence was more indirect. St. Joseph could never have received the full honors of the liturgy had not his dignity been solidly established by the Dominican theologians of the Church. Foremost in this number were St. Albert the Great and St.

Thomas Aquinas, whose praises of Mary led them to expound the purity and the exalted vocation of her most chaste spouse" (*The Man Nearest to Christ*, p. 152). In 1521 the first real theological treatise on St. Joseph was published by an Italian Dominican, Fr. Isidore de Isolani.

The first American province of the Dominican Order, established over 150 years ago, was placed under the patronage of St. Joseph. This province of St. Joseph now covers the whole eastern U.S., from New England to Florida, from Grand Rapids to Memphis. The first church in Ohio, built by the pioneer American Dominicans, was dedicated to St. Joseph—and the parish of St. Joseph is still flourishing at Somerset, Ohio. Next to the church is a novitiate where young men begin their training to become Dominican priests and brothers.

The present provincial of St. Joseph's Province, the Very Rev. William D. Marrin, O.P., has done much to encourage Dominican devotion to St. Joseph. He has reminded the fathers and brothers of the importance of dedicating each Wednesday to the honor of St. Joseph. By virtue of a special indult which Fr. Marrin obtained, the friars of St. Joseph's province continue to chant an antiphon, versicle and prayer to St. Joseph every day after dinner. He has also promoted special studies

and courses on St. Joseph for Dominican teachers and preachers.

In March, 1960, at the Shrine Church of St. Jude in New York City, devotions in honor of St. Joseph were inaugurated at the 12:10 Mass and at 8 P.M. after the novena for the feast of St. Joseph. Since that time these devotions have been continued every Wednesday of the year.

The following pages contain some prayers and practices in honor of St. Joseph. We hope that they will be helpful in bringing souls closer to St. Joseph and consequently, closer to Mary and to Jesus.

THE LITANY OF ST. JOSEPH

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, 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

Saint Joseph

Famous descendant of David

Glory of the patriarchs

Husband of the Mother of God

} pray for us

Virtuous guardian of the Virgin
Foster father of the Son of God
Alert defender of Christ
Head of the Holy Family
Joseph, so just
Joseph, so chaste
Joseph, so prudent
Joseph, outstanding in fortitude
Joseph, outstanding in obedience
Joseph, outstanding in fidelity
Image of patience
Lover of poverty
Example for workmen
Glory of home life
Protector of virgins
Strength of families
Consoler of people in misery
Hope of the sick
Rescuer of the dying
Terror of the demons
Watchman of the Holy Church

pray for us

Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world, spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world, graciously listen to us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

℣. He appointed him master of his household.

℞. And ruler over all his possessions.

LET US PRAY. O God, who in an inexpressible providence chose Saint Joseph to be the husband of Your most holy Mother, grant that we may merit to have him as an intercessor in heaven whom we venerate as a protector on earth: who live and reign forever. Amen.

(For the recitation of the litany of St. Joseph there is granted an indulgence of 5 years; a plenary indulgence on the usual conditions, if this litany together with its versicle and response and prayer are recited daily for a month. [S. P. Ap. 21 Mar. 1935])

PRAYERS

A Prayer Personally Approved and Indulged by Pope St. Pius X:

O Joseph, virgin father of Jesus, most pure husband of the Virgin Mary, pray for us every day to the same Jesus, the Son of God, that, aided by the weapon of grace and rightly carrying on the battle in life, we may be crowned by Him at our death.

— an indulgence of 500 days (exhib. 26 Nov. 1906; S. P. Ap. 23 May 1931).

An Invocation Recited Every Day by Dominicans:

(*Antiphon.*) Behold, the faithful and prudent servant whom the Lord placed at the head of His family.

℣. The Lord loved him and adorned him.

℞. He clothed him with the robe of glory.

Let us pray. May the prayers of the blessed patriarch Joseph, husband of Your most holy Mother, help us, O Lord, we pray, that what is not in our own power to obtain, may be given to us at his intercession: who live and reign forever. Amen.

Prayer of Pope Leo XIII:

In our tribulation, O blessed Joseph, we come to you and, after asking the help of your most holy wife, we trustfully beg your protection, too. You were united in charity with the immaculate Virgin Mother of God, and you received the Child Jesus with paternal love; we ask you by this love to look graciously upon the inheritance which Jesus Christ acquired at the price of His own Blood, and hasten to help us in our needs by your power and intercession. O most careful guardian of the divine Family, protect the chosen children of Jesus Christ. Preserve us, O most loving father, from every contagion of error and corruption. You are our most powerful defender: mercifully assist us from heaven in this struggle with the powers of darkness; and just as you once rescued the Child Jesus from the great danger to His life, so now defend the holy Church of God from the plots of the enemy

and from every affliction. Protect every one of us and intercede for us continually, that, imitating what you did, and growing stronger by your help, we may be able to live a holy life, to die in the state of grace, and to come to the eternal blessedness of heaven. Amen.

— an indulgence of 3 years.

— an indulgence of 7 years during the month of October, when said after the recitation of the Rosary, and on any Wednesday of the year.

— a plenary indulgence once a month, on the usual conditions, for the daily recitation of this prayer (Leo XIII, encyc. 15 Aug. 1889; S. C. Ind. 21 Sept. 1889; S. P. Ap. 10 Mar. 1941).

Prayers for the Dying:

Eternal Father, by the love You bear toward Saint Joseph, who was chosen by You from among all men to exercise Your divine fatherhood over Your Son made man, have mercy on us and upon all poor souls who are in their agony.

Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory

Eternal Son of God, by the love You bear toward Saint Joseph, who was Your most faithful guardian upon earth, have mercy on

us and upon all poor souls who are in their agony.

Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory

Eternal Spirit of God, by the love You bear toward Saint Joseph, who guarded with such tender care the most holy Mary, Your beloved Spouse, have mercy on us and upon all poor souls who are in their agony.

Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory

Prayer for the Feast of St. Joseph the Workingman (May 1):

O God, maker of all things, who instituted the law of work for the human race, kindly grant that by the example and help of St. Joseph we may do the works which You prescribe and attain the rewards which You promise. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Private Novena to St. Joseph, by Fr. Louis Lallement, S.J.:

It consists of turning to St. Joseph four times a day (it does not matter when or where) and honoring him in the four points of

1. *His fidelity to grace.* Think of this for a moment, thank God, and ask through St. Joseph to be faithful to grace.
2. *His fidelity to the interior life.* Think, thank God, and ask.
3. *His love of our Blessed Lady.* Think, thank God, and ask.
4. *His love for the Holy Child Jesus.* Think, thank God, and ask.

Only one point is to be taken at a time.

[From a leaflet published by The Old Palace, Mayfield, Sussex, England. Imprim. Abp. Francis P. Keough, 4 Apr. 1953.]

A Prayer to Know God's Will:

Great St. Joseph, God had a special work for you to do. He willed that you should be the husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary and be the foster father of Jesus. God did not always tell you His will directly and immediately; you had many difficult decisions to make. With the help of God's grace you saw His will in the workings of Divine Providence. I want to do God's will all my life, and to merit eternal happiness, but right now I do not know just what is God's will for me. I ask your help, St. Joseph. Intercede for me, and obtain the light to know what God wants me to do, and the grace of courage to do it. Amen.

A Prayer After Communion:

St. Joseph, father and guardian of virgins, to your faithful care were committed Jesus Christ, Innocence itself, and Mary the Virgin of virgins. Through these two most dear pledges, Jesus and Mary, I implore and entreat you to preserve me from all impurity, and make me always serve Jesus and Mary with a most pure heart and chaste body. Amen.

— an indulgence of 3 years.

— a plenary indulgence under the usual conditions if said daily for one month (Pius XI, 18 May 1936).

INDULGENCED PRACTICES IN HONOR OF ST. JOSEPH

Note: When a plenary indulgence is granted "under the usual conditions," it means one must:

1. *Go to confession* within 8 days immediately preceding the day of obtaining the indulgence, or within a week after. Those who are accustomed to go to confession at least twice a month, or to receive Holy Communion in the state of grace and with a right intention, fulfil this requirement of confession.
2. *Receive Holy Communion*, either on the day of the indulgence, the day before, or within a week after.

3. *Visit a church or public oratory.*
4. *Pray for the intentions of the Holy Father.* One Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory will be sufficient for the indulgence, although one may say more prayers for the Pope.

1. INVOKING THE NAME OF JOSEPH. The faithful who, in order to obtain the assistance of St. Joseph in the various needs of their spiritual and physical life, devoutly invoke his holy name, are granted:

- an indulgence of 300 days;
- a plenary indulgence on the usual conditions, provided they devoutly repeat this invocation every day for a month. (S. P. Ap. 22 Oct. 1940)

2. NOVENA. The faithful who devoutly take part in a public novena in honor of St. Joseph, spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in preparation for the feast, may gain:

- an indulgence of 7 years on any day;
- a plenary indulgence, on the conditions of confession, Communion and prayer for the intentions of the Sovereign Pontiff, if they take part in the exercises of the novena for at least five days.

Those who perform their devotions privately at the aforesaid time, with the intention of so continuing for nine successive days, may gain:

- an indulgence of 5 years, once, on any day;
- a plenary indulgence, on the usual conditions, at the end of the novena; but where such devout exercises are held publicly this indulgence can be gained only by those who are lawfully hindered from being present at the public exercises [e.g. by illness, or work, etc.]. (S. C. Ind. 26 Nov. 1876; S. P. Ap. 4 Mar. 1935)

3. **FIRST WEDNESDAY.** The faithful who on the first Wednesday of any month perform some devout exercise in honor of St. Joseph, may gain:

- an indulgence of 5 years;
- a plenary indulgence on the usual conditions. (S. P. Ap. 1 Apr. 1921; 27 Nov. 1928, and 13 May 1933)

4. **BEFORE A STATUE OR PICTURE OF ST. JOSEPH.** The faithful who before an image of St. Joseph recite piously the *Our Father*, *Hail Mary*, and *Glory*, with the invocation *Saint Joseph pray for me*, may gain:

- an indulgence of 300 days;
- a plenary indulgence on the usual conditions, if this pious practice is continued for an entire month. (S. P. Ap. 12 Oct. 1936)

THE WAY

We see you traveling along the way
Through narrow paths of Egypt's star-filled
 night
And now you try to find a place to lay
Your Child to rest in this predestined
 flight.

But Mary's help is beautiful and strong.
She holds her well-loved Son, your heart's
 delight,
And as you walk the miles that seem so
 long
And rough for them, we know you guide
 them right.

Help me, Joseph, to be like you a saint,
To walk along life's road without
 complaint!

—HELEN FONSECA

4671944

SHRINE OF ST. JUDE THADDEUS

THE DOMINICAN FATHERS
411 EAST 68th STREET
NEW YORK 21, N. Y.