

March – St. Joseph

The month of March is dedicated to St Joseph. Joseph was the husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the foster-father of Jesus. Holy Scripture proclaims him as “a just man” and the Church has turned to Joseph for his patronage and protection.

Pope Leo XIII in his encyclical *Quamquam Pluries* (On the Devotion to St. Joseph) in 1889 explains why we place so much trust in this saint:



"Thus in giving Joseph the Blessed Virgin as spouse, God appointed him to be not only her life's companion, the witness of her maidenhood, the protector of her honor, but also, by virtue of the conjugal tie, a participator in her sublime dignity. And Joseph shines among all mankind by the most august dignity, since by divine will, he was the guardian of the Son of God and reputed as His father among men. Hence it came about that the Word of God was humbly subject to Joseph, that He obeyed him, and that He rendered to him all those offices that children are bound to render to their parents. From this two-fold dignity flowed the obligation which nature lays upon the head of families, so that Joseph became the guardian, the administrator, and the legal

defender of the divine house whose chief he was. And during the whole course of his life he fulfilled those charges and those duties. ...it is, then, natural and worthy that as the Blessed Joseph ministered to all the needs of the family at Nazareth and girt it about with his protection, he should now cover with the cloak of his heavenly patronage and defend the Church of Jesus Christ."

Heroic Model of All Virtues

The Church encourages us to be devoted to St Joseph because he was a model in the heroic practice of all the virtues. The example of virtuous living that **he gave in the exact fulfillment of the duties of his state of life** is worthy of our reflection. Read the gospel and you will see his faith, hope and charity practiced under trying circumstances.

- He was prudent in caring for his wife and the child;
- he showed great leadership in protecting them and assisting them.
- He was religious in every sense, with that delicacy and sincerity of conscience that is proper to the saints of God.
- He was just in his dealings with God and man.
- He was conspicuous for his fortitude and courage.
- He was truly outstanding in the practice of virginal chastity.
- More: he protected and defended Mary's virtue in the time of courtship and all during their life together. They had made a promise of chastity, and because they were resolved to live it for God they were blessed above all others. While Mary inspired him to practice this virtue perfectly, he, as a real man, understood the profound meaning of her inspiration and how it came from a heart that was steeped in the love of God.

Time and again the Church has made it clear that Saint Joseph is not a saint for only a certain number of souls, but that he can help all men.

Excerpted from St. Joseph: a Theological Introduction by Michael D. Griffin, O.C.D.

Prayer to St. Joseph

Oh St. Joseph whose protection is so great, so strong, so prompt before the throne of God, I place in you all my interests and desires.

Oh St. Joseph do assist me by your powerful intercession and obtain for me from your Divine Son spiritual blessings through Jesus Christ, Our Lord; so that having engaged here below your I Heavenly power may offer my Thanksgiving and Homage to the most Loving of Fathers.

Oh St. Joseph, I never weary contemplating you and Jesus asleep in your arms. I dare not approach while He reposes near your 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.

St Joseph, Patron of departing souls, pray for us. Amen

Blessed are you St. Joseph

Blessed are you St. Joseph, witness of the glory of God here on earth!

Blessed and glorified be God who chose you!

Blessed and glorified be the Son who obeyed you!

Blessed and glorified be the Holy Spirit who sanctified you!

Most Blessed be Mary who loved you!

Prayer of Pope Leo XIII to St. Joseph

This prayer is often said after the Prayer of the Most Holy Rosary during the months of March and October. To you, O Blessed Joseph, we come in our trials, and having asked the help of your most holy spouse, we confidently ask your patronage also. Through that sacred bond of charity which united you to the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God and through the fatherly love with which you embraced the Child Jesus, we humbly beg you to look graciously upon the beloved inheritance which Jesus Christ purchased in his blood, and to aid us in our necessities with your power and strength:

O most provident guardian of the Holy Family, defend the chosen children of Jesus Christ. Most beloved father, dispel the evil of falsehood and sin. Our most mighty protector, graciously assist us from heaven in our struggle with the powers of darkness. And just as you once saved the Child Jesus from mortal danger, so now defend God's Holy Church from the snares of her enemies and from all adversity. Shield each one of us by your constant protection, so that, supported by your example and your help, we may be able to live a virtuous life, to die a holy death, and to obtain eternal happiness in heaven. Amen.

A Prayer for Workers - Prayer to St. Joseph the Worker (St. John XXIII)

This beautiful prayer was composed by St. Pope John XXIII (1958-63). It places all workers under the patronage of St. Joseph the Worker, and asks for his intercession so that we may regard our work as a means of growing in holiness.

O glorious Joseph! Who concealed your incomparable and regal dignity of custodian of Jesus and of the Virgin Mary under the humble appearance of a craftsman and provided for them with your work, protect with loving power your sons, especially entrusted to you.

You know their anxieties and sufferings, because you yourself experienced them at the side of Jesus and of His Mother. Do not allow them, oppressed by so many worries, to forget the purpose for which they were created by God. Do not allow the seeds of distrust to take hold of their immortal souls. Remind all the workers that in the fields, in factories, in mines, and in scientific laboratories, they are not working, rejoicing, or suffering alone, but at their side is Jesus with Mary, His Mother and ours, to sustain them, to dry the sweat of their brow, giving value to their toil. Teach them to turn work into a very high instrument of sanctification as you did. Amen.

Prayer to St. Joseph

This prayer was found in the fiftieth year of our lord and Savior Jesus Christ, in 1500's. It was sent by the Pope to Emperor Charles when he was going into battle. Whoever shall read this prayer or hear it or keep it about themselves shall never die a sudden death, or be drowned, nor shall poison take effect on them; neither shall they fall into the hands of the enemy, or shall be burned in any fire or shall be overpowered in battle. Say this prayer for nine mornings for anything you may desire. It has never been known to fail, so be sure you really want what you ask.

O St. Joseph whose protection is so great, so strong, so prompt before the Throne of God, I place in you all my interests and desires. O St. Joseph do assist me by your powerful intercession and obtain for me from your Divine Son all spiritual blessings through Jesus Christ, Our Lord; so that having engaged here below your Heavenly power I may offer my thanksgiving and homage to the most loving of Fathers. O St. Joseph, I never weary contemplating you and Jesus asleep in your arms. I dare not approach while He reposes near your 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. St. Joseph, Patron of departing souls, pray for us. Amen

Imprimatur Most Rev. George W. Ahr, Bishop of Trenton

Memorare to Saint Joseph

Remember, O most pure spouse of the Virgin Mary, that never it has been heard that anyone invoked your patronage and sought your aid without being comforted. Inspired by this confidence I come to you and fervently commend myself to you. Despise not my petition, O dearest foster father of our Redeemer, but accept it graciously. Amen

Parent's Prayer

O Glorious St Joseph, to you, God committed the care of His only begotten Son amid the many dangers of this world.

We come to you and ask you to take under your special protection the children God has given us. Through holy baptism, they became children of God and members of His Holy Church.

We consecrate them to you today, that through this consecration they may become your foster children.

Guard them, guide their steps in life, form their hearts after the hearts of Jesus and Mary.

St Joseph, who felt the tribulation and worry of a parent when the child Jesus was lost, protect our dear children for time and eternity.

May you be their father and counsellor.

Let them, like Jesus, grow in age as well as in wisdom and grace before God and men.

Preserve them from the corruption of his world, and give us the grace one day to be united with them in Heaven forever. Amen.

Happy Death

O Glorious St. Joseph, behold I choose thee today for my special patron in life and at the hour of my death. Preserve and increase in me the spirit of prayer and fervour in the service of God. Remove far from me every kind of sin; obtain for me that my death may not come upon me unawares, but that I may have time to confess my sins sacramentally and to bewail them with a most perfect understanding and a most sincere and perfect contrition, in order that I may breathe forth my soul into the hands of Jesus and Mary. Amen