

MONTH #7 JOSEPH, A FATHER IN THE SHADOWS

Opening Prayer: Teach us Joseph

Teach us, Joseph,
how not to be a protagonist,
how to work without showing off,
how to advance without trampling,
how to collaborate without driving,
how you love without claiming.

Tell us how to live
being number two ... or three,
how great things are done
from a second place.
Tell us how the vast majority
of us have to occupy
these places.

The second places,
where our
true and hidden greatness is found.
Tell us how to live with elegance
being not important.
Convince us that we can be
and must be useful, faithful, effective,
even heroes,
being "non- important".

Explain to us how to be great without showing off,
how to fight without applause,
how to progress without advertising,
how to persevere and how to die
without receiving
tributes or statues of honor.

How to be helpful, positive, generous
without needing to be "important" and even more difficult,
how to give it all, without being the protagonist,
and despite this, feel peace,
deep happiness, and joy.
Teach us, Joseph!

Reflections on the year of Saint Joseph

The grace that I seek: To value the inner freedom with which Saint Joseph assumes his role as father without seeking to possess the family entrusted to him and to learn from this attitude for my own family life.

Apostolic Letter *Patris corde*: "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. " (*Patris corde* 7)

P. Judge: "What a privilege was his when he reached out bread to Him Whose harvests would feed the world for untold generations. But his joy of joys was this: to know that those divine arms clasped around his neck in childish love and affection, those arms that one day would be stretched out upon a Cross, that they, when the Precious Blood had flowed, would finally clasp the whole human race in redeeming love; and moreover, those blessed arms would be about St. Joseph in his dying moments." (MCM 332)

Meditation: pause in silence (1 minute) and repeat this phrase while breathing deeply: As I breathe in - spirit of Saint Joseph

As I breathe out- instruct my fatherhood/motherhood

Reflection: The role of father exercised by Saint Joseph invites me to... In my role as father/mother, do I promote the freedom of my children? In what situations is it more difficult for me to be a father / mother?

Thanking God: petitions. (Pray for the health of the sick who fight against Covid-19)

Suggestion: During this month, give thanks for having been blessed with the gift of fatherhood / motherhood and live it in a more faithful way. Pause and constantly repeat the suggested phrase as you breathe in and breathe out.

By the end of the day: Ask God for the grace to be a father / mother as example of Saint Joseph, who fosters the freedom of his family.

Final prayer: Prayer of Pope Francis to Saint Joseph

Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
To you God entrusted his only Son;

Reflections on the year of Saint Joseph

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.