

NOVENA TO SAINT JOSEPH

Opening prayer

All

Blessed Joseph, to you we come in our need, and after imploring the help of your holy spouse, we trustingly request your protection. With the charity that had you united with the Immaculate Virgin Mary, Mother of God, and with the paternal love with which you embraced Baby Jesus, we humbly beg that you turn your eyes to the inheritance that with his Blood he acquired, and with your power and assistance you help us in our needs. Assist us from heaven and constantly protect each one of us, so that through your example and sustained by your help, we may live and die holy and reach eternal happiness in heaven. Amen.



FIRST DAY

Saint Joseph, glory of Christian virginity

Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the Holy Spirit. (Mt 1:18)

Let us look upon Joseph, chaste, so that he may show us how delicate we must be in modesty, how we must dedicate ourselves in acquiring a crystal-like purity, how needy of continuous precautions is the fragile vessel in which is stored so much goodness. He will encourage us in our faltering, he will fortify us in our struggles. This faithful custodian will raise us up in our stumbles and falls, helping us to have present in front of us, the coat of arms of virginal innocence, and the most pure and perfect chastity that is the eternal reward in heaven.

V. Saint Joseph, may we live a dignified life,

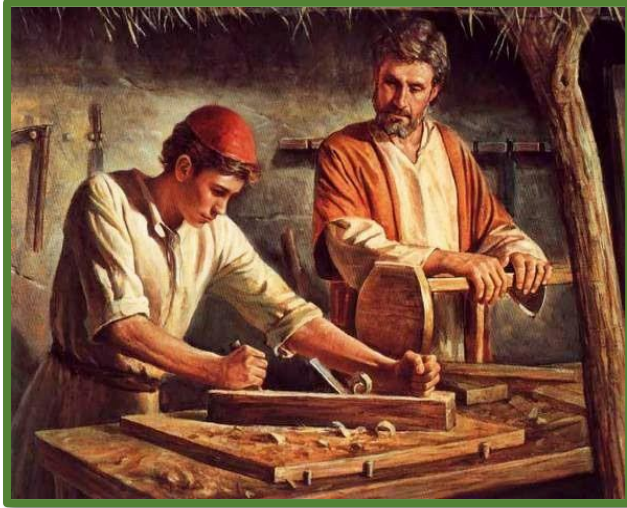
R. That will always be safe under your protection.

Closing prayer

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SECOND DAY

Saint Joseph, glory of dignified work

He came to his native place and taught the people in their synagogue. They were astonished and said, 'Where did this man get such wisdom and mighty deeds? Is he not the carpenter's son? Is not his mother named Mary and his brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas?' (Mt 13:54-55)

Because of original sin, man was condemned to work so that he could eat, dress and satisfy his needs. Also today, at the cost of sacrifice, Christ-God who rehabilitated the fallen man, rehabilitated man's work by becoming his glory, his well-being, and his happiness. Oh, saint Joseph, that with your song you accompany and sweeten your fatigued work, raise up your work to heaven as a pleasant offering to God, as pleasant as the day's psalmody. It is glorious to work in order to gain the daily bread, and also, to earn eternal life. Work does not humiliate, it dignifies, it does not degrade, it elevates and glorifies.

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THIRD DAY

Saint Joseph, glory of evangelical poverty

But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go back there. And because he had been warned in a dream, he departed for the region of Galilee. (Mt 2:22)

‘Blessed are the poor,’ the Lord has said. He wanted to intensify love for evangelical poverty with the testimony as well as with his word. He chose to be poor, and to be born of a poor mother, and to have as a father a poor man. Though saint Joseph was a descendant from kings, he did not own the material riches that added splendor and exterior grandeur to his illustrious family. Tradition has always shown us the holy carpenter as an artisan that needs his salary to eat. Who does not remember the poverty in Bethlehem and in the exile to Egypt? What comfort could they have had so far away from their native country in an unknown land among enemies of their people and their God? Let us raise our eyes and see the small humble house of saint Joseph; let us see Christ born poor, let us see him live in poverty and need, let us see on a poor deathbed those whom he most loved. Let us love his poverty that is a gift from God, as a sign and pledge of eternal happiness and a simple and possible road to reach heaven.

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FOURTH DAY

Saint Joseph, model of profound prayer

Each year his parents went to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover. (Lk 2:41)

Overall, Christian life should be a life of prayer and more so for the religious. A heart that has given itself to God is not comprehended without constant communication with him through this invisible bond. Saint Joseph should be for all Christians the model of this life of prayer. The holy Patriarch, who enjoyed the presence of God's Son the majority of his life, was also united with him through the most ardent interior contemplation. And if prayer is talking with God, how can we not call continuous prayer Joseph's continuous relationship with his divine Son?

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FIFTH DAY

Saint Joseph, model of silence and reserve

When they had departed, behold, 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. Herod is going to search for the child to destroy him.' Joseph rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed for Egypt. (Mt 2:13-14)

Quietness is indispensable for a life of prayer. Saint Joseph is a model and example of a silent and reserved life. The gospel itself seems to have wanted to express this same thing regarding the life and works of saint Joseph. He appears very few times in the Gospels, and then only when it is necessary, in order to refer to the stages in Christ's life where he intervened. It seems that the Holy Spirit intentionally presented his life in certain obscurity and penumbra, which echoes his very humility.

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SIXTH DAY

Saint Joseph, example of patience

The child's father and mother were amazed at what was said about him. (Lk 2:33)

The visit of the magi who had come from the orient to adore Jesus was still recent... And again, the angel of the Lord appears to him in a dream and says: *'Rise, take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. Herod is going to search for the child to destroy him.'* (Mt 2:13) Saint Joseph rises, takes the child and his mother by night and departs for Egypt, and there he remained until Herod had died, all with a heroic virtue of patience and abandonment.

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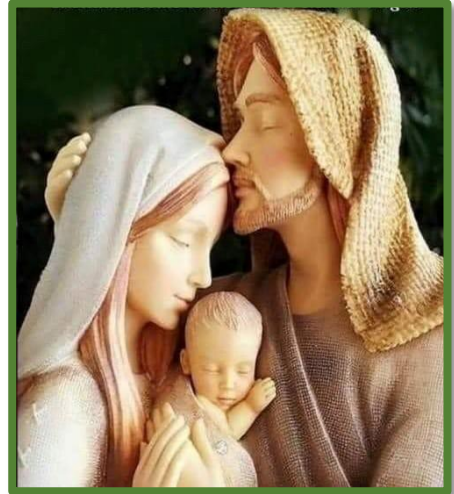
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SEVENTH DAY

Saint Joseph, example of firm trust in God

When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home. (Mt 1:24)

The foundation of Christian patience is a filial and firm trust in God. God is God and his word is God's word, and his promise is God's promise. The strength with which he welcomes his afflicted servants is the full strength of God. Let us look to saint Joseph and let us learn from him the virtue of the most serene and unshakable trust. He seemed to be lacking everything in this world, but he never doubted, because he knew that God would never be far away. In the scarcity, in the persecution, in the exile, he would raise his eyes and heart to heaven, knowing where his strength was. He did not trust in treasures that mislead, nor in the powerful that lie, nor in resources of human wisdom that deceive hope; in God he trusted and God always confirms those who wait on him; they will never be confused.

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EIGHTH DAY

Saint Joseph, example of interior peace

Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For 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. (Mt 1:20–21)

Interior peace is a magnificent gift from God, fruit of the firm trust in him. It is an excellent and precious gift, superior to all human consolation; a reward that the Lord enjoys giving in this life to those souls that are faithful to him. Saint Joseph's kind heart was a living example of this celestial peace. In his countenance he reflected it, it was pictured in his look, and it was manifested in the calm and peacefulness of his gentle words. The most difficult situations in life did not perturb him: the doubts that threatened his virginal wife, the worries of the hasty trip to Bethlehem, the poverty at the stable, the flight to Egypt. Peace will be his comfort in the difficulties of the Christian apostolate because he dedicated himself with all determination and perseverance that demand the interests of the Divine Will.

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NINTH DAY

Saint Joseph, example of kindness and meekness

Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly. (Mt 1:19)

Interior peace is reflected in the countenance, manners, actions and words of the faithful servant of God, by means of the exterior softness and meekness, that is the characteristic seal of all the saints, and so it was especially of our dear Joseph. He showed God's benevolence in the order and harmony of his relationships, in his sweet and simple affability; his zeal was always moderated by charity, an image of he who said of himself, 'learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart.' The meek possesses with his meekness a particular eloquence above the most toughened hearts.

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