

Daily Devotions To Saint Joseph

By Saint Alphonsus Liguori, adapted by Hugh J. O'Connell, C.S.S.R.
Catholic Truth Society of Oregon No.pr162 (1962)

These short but fervent devotions to Saint Joseph, arranged for each day in the month have been taken from the writings of Saint Alphonsus Liguori. Every line bears testimony to the respect, confidence and love which Saint Alphonsus felt for the foster father of Jesus.

PRAYER FOR EACH DAY.

(Read the reflection proper to the day and then close each day with the follow prayer:)

Most holy patriarch, Saint Joseph, I rejoice at the great dignity to which you have been raised in being made foster father of the Son of God, endowed with authority to command Him Whom heaven and earth obey.

My holy patron, since Jesus Himself respected and served you as His father, I, too, wish to enroll myself in your service. I choose you, after Mary, for my principal advocate and protector. I promise to honor you every day with some special devotion, and each day I will place myself under your protection.

As you did enjoy the sweet company of Jesus and Mary during your life on earth, grant that I may ever live close to them and never be separated from God by losing His grace. And as you were assisted by Jesus and Mary at the hour of your death, so grant me protection at the hour of my death, that, dying in your presence and that of Jesus and Mary, I may one day go to thank you in paradise, and in your company praise and love God for all eternity. Amen.

*Saint Joseph, patron of the universal Church, protect us. Protect our Holy Father, the Pope, and our Mother, Holy Church.

FIRST DAY.

God, because of the great love He bears us, and His great desire to see us saved, has given us among other means of salvation the practice of devotion to the saints. It is His will that they, who are His friends, should intercede for us, and by their merits and prayers obtain graces for us which we ourselves do not deserve.

But everyone must know that, after the Mother of God, Saint Joseph is, of all the saints, the one dearest to God. He has, therefore, great power with Him and can obtain graces for His devout clients. Let us then frequently say:

*Saint Joseph, give me the greatest confidence in your powerful intercession.

SECOND DAY.

We should, indeed, honor Saint Joseph, since the Son of God Himself was graciously pleased to honor him by calling him father. "Christ," says Origen, "gave to Joseph the honor due to a parent." The Holy Scriptures speak of him as the father of Jesus. "His father and mother were marveling at

the things spoken concerning Him" (Luke 2:33). Mary also used this name: "in sorrow your father and I have been seeking you" (Luke 2:48). If, then, the King of Kings was pleased to raise Joseph to so high a dignity, it is right and obligatory on our part to endeavor to honor him as much as we can.

*Saint Joseph, I consecrate myself to your service forever. Protect me all the days of my life.

THIRD DAY.

The example of Jesus Christ, Who wished to honor Saint Joseph so much, and to be subject to him on earth, ought to inflame all with a fervent devotion toward this great saint. Since the Eternal Father shared His own authority with Saint Joseph, Jesus always regarded him as a father, and respected and obeyed him for thirty years. Saint Luke says He "was subject to them" (Luke 2:51). These words mean that during all this time the sole occupation of the Redeemer was to obey Mary and Joseph. To Saint Joseph, as head of the little family, belonged the office of commanding, and to Jesus as a subject, the duty of obedience. Hence, a learned author has justly said: "Men should pay great honor to him whom the King of Kings wished to raise to such a height."

*Saint Joseph, by the obedience which Jesus rendered to you, make me always obedient to the will of God.

FOURTH DAY.

Saint Bernardine of Siena says that we should be persuaded that Our Lord, Who respected Saint Joseph on earth as His father, will refuse Him nothing in heaven; but on the contrary, will most abundantly grant His petitions. Jesus Himself advised Saint Margaret of Cortona to cherish a special devotion to Saint Joseph, and never to allow a day to pass without rendering some homage to him as His foster father. Let us not, then, fail to recommend ourselves each day to Saint Joseph and to ask him for graces.

*Saint Joseph, make me faithful in invoking you daily.

FIFTH DAY.

All the faithful should be devoted to Saint Joseph in order to obtain the grace of a good death, and this for three reasons.

1. Because Jesus Christ loved him not only as a friend, but as a father, and, therefore, his intercession is more powerful than that of the other saints.
2. Because Our Lord, in return for having saved Him from Herod, has given Saint Joseph the special privilege of protecting the dying against the snares of the devil.
3. Because Saint Joseph, who died in the company of Jesus and Mary, is the model of a holy death and can obtain this grace for his clients.

*Saint Joseph, obtain for me that, like you, I may die in the arms of Jesus and Mary

SIXTH DAY.

According to Saint John Damascene: "God gave Saint Joseph the love, the care, and the authority of a father over Jesus. He gave him the affection of a father that he might guard Him with great love; the solicitude of a father, that he might watch over Him with care; and the authority of a father that he might feel sure that he would be obeyed in all that he arranged concerning this Son."

*Saint Joseph, be always a father to us; and grant that we may be always your faithful children.

SEVENTH DAY.

When God, destines anyone for a particular office, He gives him the graces that fit him for it. Therefore, since God chose Saint Joseph to fill the office of father over the person of the Incarnate Word, we must certainly believe that he conferred upon him all the sanctity which belonged to such an office. Gerson says that among other privileges Joseph had three which were special to him. 1. That he was sanctified in his mother's womb, as were Jeremiah and Saint John the Baptist. 2. That he was at the same time confirmed in grace. 3. That he was always exempt from the inclinations of concupiscence — a privilege with which Saint Joseph by the merit of his purity, favors his devout clients by delivering them from carnal appetites.

*Saint Joseph, shining light of chastity, preserve the angelic virtue in me.

EIGHTH DAY.

In the Gospels Saint Joseph is called "just." What is meant by a just man? Saint Peter Chrysologus says: "It means a perfect man — one who possesses all virtues." Joseph was already holy before his marriage; but how much must his sanctity have increased after his union with the Blessed Virgin? The example of his holy spouse sufficed to sanctify him; and since Mary is the dispenser of all the graces which God grants to men, in what profusion must she not have showered them down upon her spouse, who she loved so much and by whom she was so tenderly loved!

*Saint Joseph, increase my devotion to Mary.

NINTH DAY.

The two disciples, going to Emmaus were inflamed with divine love by the few moments which they spent in company with our Savior, and by His words. What flames of holy love must not, then, have been enkindled in the heart of Saint Joseph, who for thirty years conversed with Jesus Christ, and listened to His words of eternal life; who observed the perfect example which Jesus gave of humility and patience, and saw the promptness with which He obeyed and helped him in his labors, and all that was needed for the household!

*Saint Joseph, inflame us with the love of Jesus.

TENTH DAY.

Saint Paul writes that in the next life Jesus Christ "will render to every man according to His works" (Romans 2:6). What great glory must we not suppose that He has bestowed upon Saint Joseph, who served and loved Him so much while He lived on earth! Our Lord has promised a reward to him who gives a cup of cold water to the poor in His name. What, then, must be the reward of Saint Joseph, who can say to Jesus Christ: "I not only provided You with food, with a dwelling, and with clothes, but I saved You from death, delivering You from the hands of Herod."

*Saint Joseph, increase our zeal for growing in holiness by the hope of eternal reward.

ELEVENTH DAY.

We must believe that the life of Saint Joseph, spent in the presence of Jesus and Mary, was a continual prayer, abounding in acts of faith, confidence, love, resignation, and oblation. Since, then, the reward of the saints corresponds to their merits during life, consider how great must be the glory of Saint Joseph in heaven. Saint Augustine compares the other saints to the stars, but Saint Joseph to the sun.

It is, then, very reasonable to suppose that Saint Joseph, after Mary, surpasses all the other saints in merit and glory. The Venerable Bernardine de Bustis (died around 1515) says that when Saint Joseph asks any grace for those who are devoted to him, his prayers have in a certain manner the force of a command with Jesus and Mary.

*Saint Joseph, obtain for us a great spirit of prayer.

TWELFTH DAY.

To prove the power which Saint Joseph possesses in paradise, Saint Bernardine of Siena writes thus: "We cannot doubt that Christ accords to Saint Joseph, now that he is in heaven, even more perfectly the respect and reverence which He paid to him on earth. Our Lord, Who on earth revered Saint Joseph as His father, will certainly deny him nothing that he asks in heaven." Let us then say to him with confidence:

*Saint Joseph, powerful protector of souls, keep us from all sin.

THIRTEENTH DAY.

O great Saint Joseph, since God has served you, I also wish to enroll myself in your service. I wish henceforth to serve you, to honor and love you. Take me under your protection and dispose of me as you please. My holy Saint Joseph, pray to Jesus for me. Having obeyed all your commands on earth, He will certainly never refuse anything you ask of Him. Tell Him to pardon me the offences that I have committed against Him. Tell Him to detach me from creatures and from myself. Ask Him to inflame me with His holy love.

*Saint Joseph, watch over us, your children.

FOURTEENTH DAY.

Most holy patriarch, now that you are on a lofty throne in heaven near your beloved Jesus, Who was subject to you on earth, have pity on me, who am exposed to the attacks of so many enemies, to the evil spirits, and the passions that continually strive to rob me of the grace of God. Through the grace given to you on earth of enjoying the continual society of Jesus and Mary, obtain for me the grace of living during the remaining days of my life united to God, by resisting the attacks of hell. Grant, too, that I may die with the love of Jesus and Mary in my heart so that I may be able one day to enjoy with you, their company in the kingdom of heaven.

*Saint Joseph, grant me a horror of sin and the grace to conquer my passions.

FIFTEENTH DAY.

Saint Bernard, speaking of Saint Joseph's power of dispensing graces to his devout servants, makes use of the following remarkable words: "To some of the saints, power is granted to succor us in particular necessities; but to Saint Joseph power is granted to succor in all necessities, and to defend all those who, with devotion, have recourse to him." Let us then often say to him:

*Saint Joseph, help us when we are in need.

SIXTEENTH DAY.

Saint Teresa says: "I do not remember to have asked any favour from Saint Joseph which he did not grant. An account of the many graces which God has bestowed upon me, and of the dangers, corporal and spiritual, from which He has delivered me through this saint would excite wonder. The

Lord appears to have given power to the other saints to assist us in a single necessity; but experience shows that Saint Joseph gives aid in all. The Lord gives us to understand that, as He was to be subject to Saint Joseph on earth, so in heaven He does whatever the saint asks."

*Saint Joseph, obtain for me the grace of perseverance in prayer.

SEVENTEENTH DAY.

Saint Teresa also writes: "I would wish to persuade all the world to be devoted to Saint Joseph, because I have long experience of the great favors which he obtains from God. I have never known any soul especially devoted to him that did not always advance in virtue. I ask, for God's sake, that they who do not believe me will at least make a trial of this devotion. I cannot believe that favours are not granted to Saint Joseph in return for the help which he gave on earth to Jesus and Mary."

*Saint Joseph, patron of the interior life, lead me to that perfection which God requires of me.

EIGHTEENTH DAY.

Let us ask Saint Joseph for the grace to love our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the particular grace which Saint Joseph obtains for those who are devout to him — a tender love toward the Incarnate Word. The saint merited the power to bestow this grace upon his servants by the great love which he himself bore toward Jesus while he lived on earth.

*Saint Joseph, make me love Jesus with all my heart.

NINETEENTH DAY.

When Jesus lived in this world in the house of Saint Joseph, could a sinner who desired to obtain forgiveness from Our Lord have found a more efficacious means of obtaining pardon than through Saint Joseph? If, then, we desire to receive the forgiveness of our sins, let us have recourse to Saint Joseph who, now that he is in heaven, is more loved by Jesus Christ than he was loved by Him on earth.

*Saint Joseph, obtain from Jesus the pardon of my sins.

TWENTIETH DAY.

"And Joseph also went from Galilee out of the town of Nazareth into Judea to the town of David, which is called Bethlehem" (Luke 2:4). In response to the decree of Caesar Augustus, Saint Joseph made the long journey across the hills from Galilee to Bethlehem with Mary, who bore beneath her heart the Incarnate Son of God. What sweet conversations must Mary and Joseph have held on this journey on the mercy of God in sending His Son into the world to redeem the human race, and on the love of this Son in coming into this valley of tears in order to atone by His suffering and death for the sins of men!

*Saint Joseph, I wish to belong entirely to you, so that through you I may belong entirely to Jesus and Mary.

TWENTY-FIRST DAY.

"And it came to pass while they were there, that the days for her to be delivered were fulfilled. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn" (Luke 2:6-7). How great must have been the sorrow of Saint Joseph when he could find no shelter for Mary on the night of the birth of the

Divine Word, and was obliged to bring her to a stable! How his heart must have been pierced with anguish to see his holy spouse, who was pregnant, and near the time of childbirth, trembling with cold in that damp cave, which was open on every side. Dear Saint Joseph, through the pain which you felt in seeing the Divine Word born in a stable, so poor, without fire, without clothes,, and in hearing the cries caused by the cold which afflicted Him, I pray you to obtain for me a true sorrow for my sins by which I have drawn tears from Jesus.

*Saint Joseph, penetrate my heart with contrition and obtain for me the grace never to sin again.

TWENTY-SECOND DAY.

"And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger" (Luke 2:7). How great must have been the joy of Saint Joseph when he heard Mary calling him and saying "Joseph, come, and adore our infant God, Who is just born in this cave. Behold how beautiful He is. Look at the King of the world in this manger, on this straw. See how He, Who makes the seraphs burn with love, trembles with cold. Behold how He Who is the joy of paradise weeps!" Dear Saint Joseph, through the joy which you received at the first sight of the infant Jesus in the crib, so beautiful and lovely that your heart began from that moment to beat with love for Him alone, obtain for me also the grace to love Jesus with an ardent love on earth so that I may one day go to enjoy Him in heaven.

*Saint Joseph, share with me a little of the burning love that you did bear to Jesus.

TWENTY-THIRD DAY.

"Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace among men of good will" (Luke 2:14). Consider how great was the love and tenderness of Saint Joseph when he beheld with his own eyes the Son of God become an infant; when he heard the angels singing around their newborn Lord, and saw the stable filled with light. Kneeling down and weeping with love and compassion, Joseph said: "I adore You, yes I adore You, my Lord and my God. How great is my happiness to be the first, after Mary, to see You born, and to know that in this world You wish to be called and reputed my Son! Allow me, then, also to call You my Son, and to say: My God and my Son, to You I consecrate my whole being. My life shall be no longer mine, but shall be Yours without reserve!"

*Saint Joseph, grant that I may spend my life, like you, in the service of God.

TWENTY-FOURTH DAY.

"An angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph, saying, 'Arise, and take the child and His mother and flee into Egypt'" (Matt. 2:13). Consider the ready obedience of Saint Joseph, who raised no doubts about the time of the journey, nor about the manner of travelling, nor about the place in Egypt in which they were to stay, but immediately prepared to set out. He instantly makes known to Mary the command of the angel, and on the same night sets out without guide on a journey of 400 miles through mountains, across rugged roads and deserts.

*My holy protector, obtain for me the grace of perfect obedience to the divine will.

TWENTY-FIFTH DAY.

How much Saint Joseph must have suffered on the journey into Egypt in seeing the sufferings of Jesus and Mary! Their food must have been a piece of hard bread. They could have slept only in some poor hut, or in the open air. Joseph was indeed conformed in all things to the will of the

Eternal Father, but his tender and loving heart could not but feel pain in seeing the Son of God trembling and weeping from cold and the other hardships which He experienced.

*Saint Joseph, obtain for me the grace that in my journey to eternity I may never lose the company of Jesus and Mary.

TWENTY-SIXTH DAY.

"The boy Jesus remained in Jerusalem, and his parents did not know it" (Luke 2:43). How great was the pain of Saint Joseph when Jesus was lost in the temple! Joseph was accustomed to the enjoyment of the sweet presence of his beloved Savior. What, then, must have been his sorrow when he was deprived of it for three days, without knowing whether he should evermore find Jesus, and most painful of all, without knowing why he had lost Him. How great, on the other hand, was Joseph's joy when he found Jesus and realized that the absence of the Child did not arise from any neglect on his part, but from a zeal for the glory of the Father.

*Saint Joseph, through the merits of the pains which you did suffer at losing Jesus, obtain for me tears to weep always for my sins.

TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY.

"He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them" (Luke 2:51). Reflect on the holy life which Joseph led in the company of Jesus and Mary. In that family there was no business except that which tended to the greater glory of God; there were no thoughts or desires except the thought and desire of pleasing God; there were no discourses except on the love which men owe to God, and which God has shown to men, especially in sending His only begotten Son into the world to suffer and to end His life in a sea of sorrows and insults for the salvation of mankind.

*Saint Joseph, through the tears which you did shed in contemplating the future passion of Jesus, obtain for me a continual remembrance of the suffering of my Redeemer.

TWENTY-EIGHTH DAY.

Consider the love which Saint Joseph bore to Mary, his holy spouse. She was the most beautiful of all women. She was more humble, more meek, more pure, more obedient, more inflamed with the love of God, than all the angels and than all men that have been or shall be created. Hence, she merited all his love. Add to this his realization of the love that she bore for him, and the fact that God had chosen her as His beloved Mother.

*Saint Joseph, obtain for me a great love for Mary, your most holy spouse.

TWENTY-NINTH DAY.

Consider the love which Joseph bore to Jesus. This love was not purely human like the love of other fathers, but super-human; for he loved Jesus not only as his son but also as his God. Joseph knew from the angel that his child was the Divine Word Who had become man to save mankind. He realized, too, that he himself had been chosen from among all men to be the protector and guardian of this divine Infant. What a flame of holy love must, then, have been enkindled in the heart of Joseph by reflecting on all these things, and by the sight of his Lord obeying him like a little boy, opening and closing the door, helping him to saw or to plane, gathering fragments of wood, or sweeping the house!

*Saint Joseph, remove from my heart all that could be an obstacle to the love of God.

THIRTIETH DAY.

"Precious in the eyes of the Lord is the death of His faithful ones" (Psalm 116:15. It is Psalm 115:6 in the Vulgate.) After having faithfully served Jesus and Mary, Saint Joseph reached the end of his life in the house at Nazareth. There, surrounded by angels, assisted by Jesus Christ the King of angels, and by Mary, his spouse, who placed themselves at each side of his poor bed, filled with the peace of paradise, he departed from this miserable life. Who shall ever be able to understand the sweetness, the consolation, the blessed hope, the acts of resignation, the flames of charity which the words of eternal life coming alternately from the lips of Jesus and Mary, breathed into the soul of Joseph at the end of his life?

*Saint Joseph, grant me peace, and resignation to God's will at the hour of my death.

THIRTY-FIRST DAY.

Great, indeed, will be the comfort of those, who, at the hour of death shall be protected by Saint Joseph. For this great saint has received from God power to command the devils and to drive them away, less they tempt his servants in their dying moments. Happy is the soul that shall be assisted by this great advocate, who, on account of having died with the assistance of Jesus and Mary, and because of having preserved the infant Jesus from the danger of death by his flight into Egypt, has received the privilege of being the patron of a good death, and of delivering his clients from the danger of eternal death.

*Saint Joseph, defend me from the attacks of the devils at the last moment of my life.

[Father O'Connell added the following two prayers to Saint Joseph. The first, the Litany, was sanctioned by Pope Saint Pius X.]

LITANY OF SAINT JOSEPH. Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, have mercy on us. Lord, have mercy on us. 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 Ghost, Have mercy on us. Holy Trinity, One God, Have mercy on us. Holy Mary, Pray for us. Saint Joseph, Pray for us. Illustrious Son 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. Diligent protector 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 valiant, 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 artisans, Pray for us. Glory of home life, Pray for us. Guardian of virgins, Pray for us. Pillar of families, Pray for us. Solace of the wretched, 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. He made him the lord of His household. And prince over all His possessions. Let us pray. O God, in Your ineffable providence You were pleased to choose Blessed Joseph to be the spouse of Your most holy Mother; grant, we beseech You, that we may be worthy to have him for our intercessor in heaven whom on earth we venerate as our Protector. Who lives and reigns, world without end Amen.

[The following prayer has a much more obscure origin which can only be traced with certainty to 1950.]

PRAYER TO SAINT JOSEPH.

O Saint Joseph, whose protection is so great, so strong, so prompt before the throne of God, I place in you all my interest and desires. O Saint 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 Saint 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. Saint Joseph, Patron of departing souls, Pray for me. Amen.

{This prayer, it is claimed, was found in the fiftieth year of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This seems most unlikely. Who ‘found’ it? Who ‘lost’ it in the first place? Who first wrote it? Where are the copies of it in the writings and archives of the saints and scholars who have lived the Christian faith since that early date? Why was it ‘found’ and not simply passed on in the living tradition of Holy Church? If the claim were true, it would mean that the prayer pre-dates the majority of the New Testament. The claim, I repeat is most improbable.

In 1505, it is further claimed that it was sent from the Pope (presumably Julius II) to Emperor Charles when he was going into battle. Now Julius was Pope in that year, but Charles V was not to be Emperor until 1519, and, in 1505, he was only five years old. Maximilian I was the Emperor in 1505. Nothing has been found in the historical record of either monarch, or of the Popes to support the assertion. The prayer, however, is a great prayer. Regrettably, it is often to be found with exaggerated claims attached to it. These claims simply cannot be substantiated but remain pious and devout hopes. We will quote a typical example: ‘Whoever shall read this prayer or hear it or keep it about themselves, shall never die a sudden death, or be drowned, or 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.’ May it be so, indeed.

Sometimes it is accompanied by this advice: “Say for nine mornings for anything you may desire.” This is good advice, surely. But then it is often ruined by words such as “It has never been known to fail”. God answers all prayers but He answers them in accordance with His most Holy Will. Wiser publishers amend this statement, if they bother with it at all, to read: “It has seldom been known to fail.” Sometimes the caution is added: “so be sure you really want what you ask.” This is prudent advice, but if one were to be so presumptuous as to maintain that one could dictate to God and manipulate Him as if he were the subject of some shaman’s ritual, by the mere performance of a (very beautiful) prayer, then one really ought to go back and repeat his Catechism classes of infancy.

Saint Joseph, patron of the universal Church, protect us. Protect our Holy Father, the Pope, and our Mother, Holy Church.

Thanks to: the Redemptorist Fathers Saint Louis.
