

Why Honor Saint Joseph

“We must be convinced that, in consideration of his great merits, God will not refuse St. Joseph any grace he asks for those who honor him.” *ST. ALPHONSUS LIGUORI*

Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ chose to enter the world through the human family; He came as an infant born into the marriage and home of the two holiest human creatures who ever lived: Joseph and Mary.

Although He was God, He was obedient to them as a Child, and under their watchful care “Jesus advanced in wisdom, and age, and grace with God and men” (Luke 2:51-52). In this Jesus gave us an example, that we too as His disciples are meant to entrust ourselves to Joseph and Mary, learning from them how to grow in holiness as the adopted children of God (Eph. 1:5).

As Christians we are blessed to have sweet Mary as our spiritual mother and valiant Joseph as our spiritual father. Just as Mary guides us from heaven with loving devotion, so too St. Joseph diligently provides for the needs of the family of God, the Holy Catholic Church.

Because of his special role as foster-father of the Child Jesus, St. Joseph has merited singular privileges in heaven unmatched by any saint excepting the Blessed Virgin Mary. Certain saints have received special insight into his holiness and the wonderful power of his heavenly intercession.

The Catholic Church as always fostered a tender to St. Joseph as the Head of the Holy Family; yet he has become increasingly prominent in the spiritual life of the Church over the last 150 years, as Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC, lists in his new book, [*Consecration to St. Joseph: The Wonders of Our Spiritual Father*](#):

1870 – Blessed Pope Pius IX declares St. Joseph the “Universal Patron of the Church.”

1879 – Apparitions at Knock, Ireland. St. Joseph appears with the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. John the Apostle, and Jesus (appearing as the Lamb of God).

1889 – Pope Leo XIII writes *Quamquam Pluries*, an encyclical letter on St. Joseph.

1908 – St. Luigi Guanella begins constructing a church dedicated to St. Joseph in Rome. It is completed and consecrated as a basilica in 1912.

1917 – Apparitions at Fatima, Portugal. During the last apparition on October 13, St. Joseph appears holding the Child Jesus and blessing the world.

1921 – Pope Benedict XV inserts the phrase “Blessed be St. Joseph, her most chaste spouse” into the Divine Praises.

1955 – Venerable Pope Pius XII establishes the Feast of St. Joseph the Worker, to be celebrated on May 1.

1962 – Pope St. John XXIII inserts St. Joseph’s name into the Canon of the Mass (Eucharistic Prayer I).

1989 – Pope St. John Paul II writes *Redemptoris Custos*, an encyclical letter on St. Joseph.

2013 – Pope Francis, echoing and fulfilling the intentions of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, inserts the name of St. Joseph into all Eucharistic Prayers. He also consecrates Vatican City State to St. Joseph.

Through this providential sequence of events, it’s clear that the Holy Spirit is at work teaching us the importance of devotion to St. Joseph at this moment in salvation history. “Now is the time of St. Joseph!” writes Father Calloway, “In our day, Jesus wants the Church to know, love, honor, and seek refuge in the spiritual fatherhood of St. Joseph.”

