

# DUC IN ALTUM

February 2021



Year of St. Joseph

Last December 8, on the 150th anniversary of Pope Pius IX's Declaration of Saint Joseph as the patron of the Church, Pope Francis announced a year of Saint Joseph. In his apostolic letter, *Patris Corde*, the Holy Father wrote that his desire to speak of St Joseph increased during the COVID pandemic. During such times, "we realize that our lives are woven together and sustained by ordinary people... often-overlooked but who are surely shaping the decisive events of our history... Each of us can discover in Joseph - the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence - an intercessor, a support and a guide in times of trouble. Saint Joseph reminds us that those who appear hidden or in the shadows can play an incomparable role in the history of salvation."

In this edition of *Duc in Altum* we are providing you with some excerpts from the writings of the Holy Fathers' on Saint Joseph along with some other resources that might be of help to you and your parishioners in this year of Saint Joseph.

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## PAPAL ENCYCLICALS ON SAINT JOSEPH

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### QUEMADMODUM DEUS

*Excerpts from the decree of Pope Pius IX  
declaring Saint Joseph Patron of the  
Universal Church*

"Him whom countless kings and prophets had desired to see, Joseph not only saw but conversed with, and embraced in paternal affection, and kissed..."

When in these most troublesome times the Church is beset by enemies on every side, and is weighed down by calamities so heavy...Pope Pius IX, in order to entrust himself and all the faithful to the Patriarch St. Joseph's most powerful patronage...has solemnly declared him Patron of the Catholic Church."

*Pope Pius IX  
December 8, 1870*

READ THE DOCUMENT: <https://osjusa.org/st-joseph/magisterium/quemadmodum-deus/>

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### QUAMQUAM PLURIES

*Excerpts from the encyclical of Pope Saint  
Leo XIII on devotion to Saint Joseph*

"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...Joseph became the guardian, the administrator, and the legal defender of the divine house whose chief he was..."

*"...with a mighty love and a  
daily solicitude"*

[Joseph] set himself to protect with a mighty love and a daily solicitude his spouse and the Divine Infant...he guarded from death the Child threatened by a monarch's jealousy, and found for Him a refuge; in the miseries of the journey and in the bitterness's of exile he was ever the companion, the assistance, and the upholder of the Virgin and of Jesus...

And for such reasons the Blessed Patriarch looks upon the multitude of Christians who make up the Church as confided specially to his trust...over which, because he is the spouse of Mary and the Father of Jesus Christ he holds, as it were, a paternal authority.” (3)

*Pope Leo XIII  
August 15, 1889*

READ THE DOCUMENT:

[http://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_l-xiii\\_enc\\_15081889\\_quamquam-pluries.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_15081889_quamquam-pluries.html)

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## REDEMPTORIS CUSTOS

*Excerpts from the apostolic exhortation of Pope Saint John Paul II on the person and mission of Saint Joseph.*

“The same aura of silence that envelops everything else about Joseph also shrouds his work as a carpenter in the house of Nazareth. It is, however, a silence that reveals in a special way the inner portrait of the man. The Gospels speak exclusively of what Joseph "did." Still, they allow us

to discover in his "actions" - shrouded in silence as they are - an aura of deep contemplation... (V.25)

*“...a brilliant example of the interior life.”*

Those souls most sensitive to the impulses of divine love have rightly seen in Joseph a brilliant example of the interior life...We can say that Joseph experienced both love of the truth, that pure contemplative love of the divine Truth which radiated from the humanity of Christ, and the demands of love, that equally pure and selfless love required for his vocation to safeguard and develop the humanity of Jesus, which was inseparably linked to his divinity... (V, 27)

Recalling that God wished to entrust the beginnings of our redemption to the faithful care of St. Joseph, she asks God to grant that she may faithfully cooperate in the work of salvation; that she may receive the same faithfulness and purity of heart that inspired Joseph in serving the Incarnate World; and that she may walk before God in the ways of holiness and justice, following Joseph's example and through his intercession. (VI.31)”

*Pope John Paul II  
August 15, 1989*

READ THE DOCUMENT:

[http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_exh\\_15081989\\_redemptoris-custos.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_15081989_redemptoris-custos.html)



## PATRIS CORDE

*Excerpts from the apostolic letter of Pope Francis on the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Quemadmodum Deus*

“In every situation, Joseph declared his own “fiat”, like those of Mary at the Annunciation and Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane...During the hidden years in Nazareth, Jesus learned at the school of

Joseph to do the will of the Father. That will was to be his daily food (cf. *Jn* 4:34). Even at the most difficult moment of his life, in Gethsemane, Jesus chose to do the Father’s will rather than his own...(3)

“...Jesus learned at the school of Joseph to do the will of the Father.”

We should always consider whether we ourselves are protecting Jesus and Mary, for they are also mysteriously entrusted to our own responsibility, care and safekeeping. The Son of the Almighty came into our world in a state of great vulnerability. He needed to be defended, protected, cared for and raised by Joseph. God trusted Joseph, as did Mary, who found in him someone who would not only save her life, but would always provide for her and her child...(5)

Jesus told us: “Learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart” (*Mt* 11:29)...By his eloquent silence, Saint Joseph says the same.”

*Pope Francis  
December 8, 2020*

READ THE DOCUMENT:

[http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_letters/documents/papa-francesco-lettera-ap\\_20201208\\_patris-corde.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_letters/documents/papa-francesco-lettera-ap_20201208_patris-corde.html)

## PRAYERS TO SAINT JOSEPH

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

- *Patris Corde*, Pope Francis

St. Joseph, by that assistance which  
Jesus and Mary gave you at death, I  
beg you to protect me in a special way  
at the hour of my death, so that dying  
assisted by you, in the company of  
Jesus and Mary, I may go to thank  
you in heaven, and in your company  
sing God's praises for all eternity.  
Amen.

- *Prayer for a Happy Death*,  
St. Alphonsus Liguori

Hail Joseph the just, wisdom is with  
you; blessed are you among all men  
and blessed is Jesus, the fruit of Mary,  
your faithful spouse.

Holy Joseph, worthy foster-father of  
Jesus Christ, pray for us sinners and  
obtain divine wisdom for us from God,  
now and at the hour of our death.  
Amen.

- *Prayer of St. Louis de Montfort*

To thee, O blessed Joseph, we have  
recourse in our affliction, and having  
implored the help of thy thrice holy  
Spouse, we now, with hearts filled  
with confidence, earnestly beg thee  
also to take us under thy protection.  
By that charity wherewith thou wert  
united to the Immaculate Virgin  
Mother of God, and by that fatherly  
love with which thou didst cherish  
the Child Jesus, we beseech thee and  
we humbly pray that thou wilt look  
down with gracious eye upon that  
inheritance which Jesus Christ  
purchased by His blood, and wilt  
succor us in our need by thy power  
and strength.

Defend, O most watchful guardian of  
the Holy Family, the chosen off-  
spring of Jesus Christ. Keep from us,  
O most loving Father, all blight of  
error and corruption. Aid us from on  
high, most valiant defender, in this  
conflict with the powers of darkness.  
And even as of old thou didst rescue  
the Child Jesus from the peril of His  
life, so now defend God's Holy  
Church from the snares of the enemy  
and from all adversity. Shield us  
ever under thy patronage, that,  
following thine example and  
strengthened by thy help, we may  
live a holy life, die a happy death,  
and attain to everlasting bliss in  
Heaven. Amen.

- *Quamquam Pluries*, Pope Leo XIII

# The Litany of Saint Joseph

Lord, have mercy on us  
*Christ, have mercy on us.*  
Lord, have mercy on us.

Jesus, hear us,  
*Jesus, 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 Spirit,  
*have mercy on us.*

Holy Trinity, one God,  
*have mercy on us.*

Holy Mary, *pray for us.*

St. Joseph, *pray for us.*

Renowned offspring 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 strong, *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 Jesus.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins  
of the world,  
graciously hear us, O Jesus.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins  
of the world,  
have mercy on us, O Jesus.

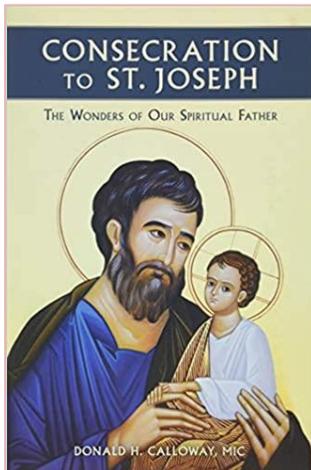
He made him the lord of his household  
and prince over all his possessions.

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 beg you, that  
we may be worthy to have him for our  
intercessor in heaven whom on earth  
we venerate as our Protector: You who  
live and reign forever and ever.

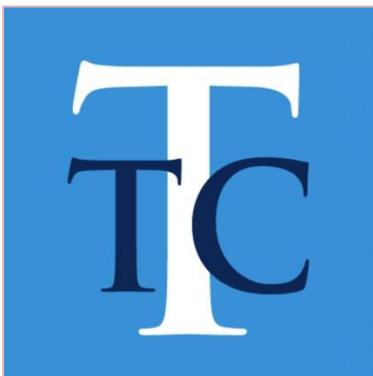
Saint Joseph, *pray for us.* Amen.

## RESOURCES FOR THE YEAR OF SAINT JOSEPH



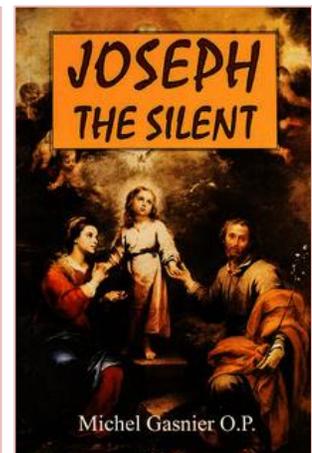
**Consecration to Saint Joseph, The Wonders of Our Spiritual Father, Fr. Donald H. Calloway, MIC** – “Consecration to St. Joseph is dedicated to meeting the challenges of the present moment and restoring order to our Church and our world, all through the potent paternal intercession and care of St. Joseph. This book has everything you need to take your love and devotion to St. Joseph to a whole different level: the first comprehensive 33-day program of consecration to St. Joseph; information on the 10 wonders of St. Joseph; and prayers and devotions to St. Joseph.”

The Diocese of Charlotte, NC has published an extensive catalog of resources for the Year of St. Joseph including access to relevant Vatican documents, devotions, traditions, art, iconography, and monthly themes. Books and Art can be found on their online bookstore. For more details, visit <https://yearofstjoseph.org/>



Read “**Doing Justice to Saint Joseph,**” by Michael Pakaluk and other articles at *TheCatholicThing.org*: “Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly.” (Matt. 1:19)... In line with interpreters such as St. Jerome, Michael Pakaluk considers a less common approach to this pivotal passage in the life of St. Joseph.

**Joseph the Silent, Michael Gasnier, O.P** – “The Gospels tell us almost nothing about St. Joseph, yet his life is full of spiritual treasures. Michel Gasnier O.P., here shows you where to find them and how they can enrich your own relationship with God. In this series of brief meditations he explores St. Joseph’s work as a carpenter, his marriage, his character, the flight into Egypt, his return to Nazareth, Simeon’s prophecy, and more. He gives you an enlightening portrait of this man who remains one of the Church’s most extraordinary saints and intercessors.



# PLENARY INDULGENCES FOR THE YEAR OF SAINT JOSEPH

By Decree of Apostolic Penitentiary

The gift of special Indulgences is granted on the occasion of the Year of Saint Joseph, announced by Pope Francis to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the proclamation of Saint Joseph as Patron of the universal Church.

Today marks 150 years since the Decree *Quemadmodum Deus*, with which Bl. Pius IX, moved by the grave and sorrowful circumstances in which the Church was threatened by mankind's hostility, declared Saint Joseph the Patron of the Catholic Church.

In order to perpetuate the entrustment of the whole Church to the powerful patronage of the Guardian of Jesus, Pope Francis has established that, from today's date, the anniversary of the Decree of the proclamation as well as a day sacred to the Blessed Immaculate Virgin and Bride of Joseph most chaste, until 8 December 2021, a special Year of Saint Joseph will be celebrated, in which all faithful, after his example, may daily reinforce their own life of faith in complete fulfilment of God's will.

All the faithful will thus have the opportunity to commit themselves, with prayer and good works, to obtain, with the help of St Joseph, head of the heavenly Family of Nazareth, comfort and relief from the serious human and social tribulations that besiege the contemporary world today.

Devotion to the Guardian of the Redeemer has developed abundantly in the course of the history of the Church, which not only attributes to him among the loftiest worship, after that of his Bride, the Mother of God, but has also conferred many patronages upon him. The Magisterium of the Church continues to reveal great things, old and new, in this treasure that is Saint Joseph, like the householder of the Gospel of Matthew "who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old" (Mt 13:52).

The gift of the Indulgences that the Apostolic Penitentiary kindly bestows during the Year of Saint Joseph, through this Decree issued according to Pope

Francis' wish, will contribute greatly to the perfect accomplishment of the designated purpose.

The Plenary Indulgence is granted under the customary conditions (sacramental confession, Eucharistic communion and prayers according to the Holy Father's intentions) to the faithful who, with a soul detached from any sin, shall participate in the Year of Saint Joseph, in the occasions and with the modalities indicated by this Apostolic Penitentiary.

a. Saint Joseph, an authentic man of faith, invites us to rediscover our filial relationship with the Father, to renew our devotion to prayer, to dispose ourselves to listen and correspond with profound discernment to God's will. The Plenary Indulgence is granted to those who shall contemplate the Lord's Prayer for at least 30 minutes, or participate in a Spiritual Retreat of at least one day which involves a meditation on Saint Joseph;

b. The Gospel attributes to Saint Joseph the appellation "just man" (cf. Mt 1:19): he, guardian of the intimate secret that lies right at the bottom of the heart and soul" (1), depository of the mystery of God and therefore an ideal patron of the internal forum, spur us to rediscover the value of silence, prudence and integrity in carrying out our duties. The virtue of justice practiced by Saint Joseph in an exemplary manner is full adherence to divine law, which is the law of mercy, "for it is the very mercy of God that brings true justice to fulfilment" (2). Therefore those who, after the example of Saint Joseph, shall fulfil a work of corporal or spiritual work of mercy, will likewise be able to attain the gift of the Plenary Indulgence;

c. The primary aspect of Saint Joseph's vocation was that of being guardian of the Holy Family of Nazareth, spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary and legal father of Jesus. In order that all Christian families may be inspired to recreate the same atmosphere of intimate communion, love and prayer that was lived by the Holy Family, the Plenary Indulgence is granted for the recitation of the Holy Rosary in families and among betrothed;

d. The Servant of God Pius XII, on 1 May 1955 instituted the Feast of Saint Joseph the Worker, "with the intent that the dignity of work be recognized by all, and that it inspires social life and laws, based on the fair distribution of rights and duties" (3). Therefore the Plenary Indulgence may be obtained by those who shall daily entrust their life to the protection of Saint

Joseph, and all faithful who shall invoke through prayer the intercession of the Worker of Nazareth, so that those in search of work may find employment and the work of all people may be more dignified;

e. The flight of the Holy Family to Egypt “shows us that God is there where man is in danger, where man suffers, where he runs away, where he experiences rejection and abandonment” (4). The Plenary Indulgence is granted to the faithful who shall recite the Litanies to Saint Joseph (for the Latin tradition), or the Akathistos to Saint Joseph, in their entirety or at least some part of it (for the Byzantine tradition), or some other prayer to Saint Joseph, proper to other liturgical traditions, in favour of the Church persecuted ad intra and ad extra and for the relief of all Christians who suffer any form of persecution.

Saint Teresa of Ávila recognized in Saint Joseph the protector for all the circumstances of life: “To other saints, the Lord seems to have given grace to help us in some of our necessities. But my experience is that Saint Joseph helps us in them all” (5). More recently, Saint John Paul II emphasized that the figure of Saint Joseph has acquired “a renewed relevance for the Church of our time, in relation to the new Christian millennium”(6).

To reaffirm the universality of Saint Joseph’s patronage over the Church, in addition to the aforementioned occasions the Apostolic Penitentiary grants the Plenary Indulgence to the faithful who shall recite any prayer legitimately approved or act of piety in honour of Saint Joseph, for example, “To you, O Blessed Joseph”, especially on the occasions of 19 March and 1 May, on the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, on the Sunday of Saint Joseph (according to the Byzantine tradition), on the 19th of every month and every Wednesday, the day dedicated to the Saint’s memory, according to the Latin tradition.

In the current context of the health emergency, the gift of the Plenary Indulgence extends particularly to the elderly, the sick, the suffering and all those who for legitimate reasons are unable to leave the house, and who with a soul detached from any sin and with the intention to fulfil, as soon as possible, the three customary conditions in their own home or wherever the impediment detains them, shall recite an act of piety in honour of Saint Joseph, Comfort of the Sick and Patron of a Happy Death, faithfully offering to God their suffering and the hardships of their life.

In order to pastorally facilitate the attainment of divine grace through the power of the Keys, this Penitentiary prays earnestly that all priests endowed with the appropriate faculties may offer themselves with a willing and generous soul to the celebration of the Sacrament of Penance and often administer Holy Communion to the infirm.

This Decree is valid for the Year of Saint Joseph, notwithstanding any disposition to the contrary.

Given in Rome, from the See of the Apostolic Penitentiary,  
on 8 December 2020

*Cardinal Mauro Piacenza*  
*Major Penitentiary*

*Krzysztof Nykiel*  
*Regent*

L. + S.

Prot. n. 866/20/I

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1. PIUS XI, Address on the occasion of the proclamation of the heroic virtues of the Servant of God Emilia de Vialar, in 'L'Osservatore Romano', year LXXV, n. 20-21 March 1935, 1.
  2. FRANCIS, General Audience, 3 February 2016.
  3. PIUS XII, Address on the occasion of the Solemnity of Saint Joseph the Worker, 1 May 1955, in Discorsi e Radiomessaggi di Sua Santità Pio XII, XVII, 71-76.
  4. FRANCIS, Angelus, 29 December 2013.
  5. TERESA D'ÁVILA, Life, VI, (translated from Italian, in EAD., Tutte le opere, ed. M. BETTEDINI, Milan 2018, 67).
  6. JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Exhortation Redemptoris Custos on the figure and mission of Saint Joseph in the life of Christ and of the Church (15 August 1989), 32.

*L'Osservatore Romano*

11 December 2020, page 4

<https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/in-the-year-of-saint-joseph-the-gift-of-indulgences-20560>