YEAR OF ST. JOSEPH

Sunday, August 16th - Saturday, May 1st

Pastoral Guide for Celebrating the Year of St. Joseph
July 17, 2020

Dear Pastors, Administrators, and Priests of the Diocese of Lafayette:

These last four months have been extremely difficult for our Church and, indeed, the entire world. The spread of the coronavirus disease as well as social and political strife have brought great suffering. We suffer physically and emotionally, amid anxiety, sickness and death. We suffer economically, whether that be unemployment, underemployment, or the struggle to make ends meet. We suffer separation from our usual practice of the sacraments, the usual life of our parishes, and the usual exercise of our priestly ministry. Isolation and frustration have become regular features of our lives.

In the midst of this suffering, the Lord offers us the person of St. Joseph, whose declaration as Patron of the Universal Church we celebrate this year, beginning on Sunday, August 16, 2020, and ending on Saturday, May 1, 2021. In this year, we go to Joseph, the faithful and prudent steward whom the Lord has set over his household. He who faithfully guarded Christ and Our Lady is our faithful guardian, too.

In this *Pastoral Guide for Celebrating the Year of St. Joseph*, you’ll find:

- A Calendar of Events with particular details about Kickoff Weekend
- Information on the Year of St. Joseph Indulgence and our 13 St. Joseph Parishes, designated as pilgrimage sites during this year
- Prayers, Activities, and Templates for use in your parishes and other communities

In light of the pastoral advantage that the celebration of this year holds for the faithful of our Diocese, I direct that the following changes be made to our local liturgical calendar:

- The Votive Mass of St. Joseph (*Roman Missal*, Votive Masses, no. 13) with its accompanying readings (*Lectionary*, vols. I or II, nos. 543 or 559) is to be celebrated at all anticipated Masses on Saturday, August 15, and at all Masses on Sunday, August 16.
- The same Votive Mass is to be celebrated on each first Wednesday of the month from August 16 through May 1, with the exceptions of October 7 (the Memorial of Our Lady of the Rosary), November 4 (the Memorial of St. Charles Borromeo), and April 7 (Wednesday of the Octave of Easter).

St. Joseph, patron of the Universal Church, pray for us and for the Diocese of Lafayette! With every good wish, I am

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Most Reverend J. Douglas Deshotel, D.D.
Bishop of Lafayette

JDD: mhb
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I. Why St. Joseph? Why Now?

On December 8, 1870, The Sacred Congregation of Rites promulgated the following decree, which communicated the decision of Pope Pius IX to declare St. Joseph Patron of the Universal Church, and which also raised St. Joseph’s feast of March 19 to the rank of double of the first class.

**Quemadmodum Deus**

**Pope Pius IX**

As almighty God appointed Joseph, son of the patriarch Jacob, over all the land of Egypt to save grain for the people, so when the fullness of time had come and he was about to send to earth his only-begotten Son, the Savior of the world, he chose another Joseph, of whom the first had been the type, and he made him the lord and chief of his household and possessions, the guardian of his choicest treasures.

Indeed, he had as his spouse the Immaculate Virgin Mary, of whom was born by the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ our Lord, who deigned to be reputed in the sight of men as the son of Joseph, and was subject to him.

Him whom countless kings and prophets had desired to see, Joseph not only saw but conversed with, and embraced in paternal affection, and kissed. He most diligently reared him whom the faithful were to receive as the bread that came down from heaven whereby they might obtain eternal life.

Because of this sublime dignity which God conferred on his most faithful servant, the Church has always most highly honored and praised blessed Joseph next to his spouse, the Virgin Mother of God, and has besought his intercession in times of trouble.

And now therefore, when in these most troublesome times the Church is beset by enemies on every side, and is weighed down by calamities so heavy that ungodly men assert that the gates of hell have at length prevailed against her, the venerable prelates of the whole Catholic world have presented to the Sovereign Pontiff their own petitions and those of the faithful committed to their charge, praying that he would deign to constitute St. Joseph Patron of the Church. And this time their prayer and desire was renewed by them even more earnestly at the Sacred Ecumenical Council of the Vatican.

Accordingly, it has now pleased our Most Holy Sovereign, Pope Pius IX, in order to entrust himself and all the faithful to the Patriarch St. Joseph’s most powerful patronage, has chosen to comply with the prelates’ desire and has solemnly declared him Patron of the Catholic Church.
II. OPENING WEEKEND CELEBRATION (AUGUST 15-16)

Ideas to Kickoff the Year

- Distribute prayer cards and Year of St. Joseph commemorative booklets
- Insert bishop's pastoral letter into bulletins
- Highlight St. Joseph statue, side altar, artwork, etc.
- Introduce hymns “By the Creator Joseph Was Appointed” and “Dear Guardian of Mary” (See Prayers and Liturgy section or St. Joseph commemorative book). Use them regularly throughout the year.
- Pray a novena leading up to Sunday, August 16.
- Highlight the person and life of St. Joseph in your preaching. (See Preaching Guide Section).
- Follow Mass with a Holy Hour (See Prayers and Liturgy section for suggested template or the appendix).
- Promote pilgrimages to the 13 St. Joseph parishes in the diocese and the plenary indulgence offered (See Parish Pilgrimage Sites section for complete list).
- Encourage attendance at the parish missions and celebrations around the diocese, especially those in your deanery. Encourage attendance at your deanery’s regional event and other diocesan-wide events (See Parish Pilgrimage Sites section for complete list).

Votive Mass of St. Joseph

The Votive Mass of St. Joseph (Roman Missal, Votive Masses, no. 13) with its accompanying readings (Lectionary, vols. I or II, nos. 543 or 559) is to be celebrated at all anticipated Masses on Saturday, August 15th, and at all Masses on Sunday, August 16th. On this Sunday, two readings must proceed the Gospel. If you choose the readings from May 1, use the reading from Genesis as the first reading and Colossians as the second. Accompanying readings are found below:

[no. 543] From Solemnity of St. Joseph, Husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary (March 19)

First Reading
Samuel 7:4-5a, 12-14a, 16

Responsorial Psalm
Psalm 89:2-3, 4-5, 27, 29

Second Reading
4:13, 16-18, 22

Gospel
Matthew 1:16, 18-21, 24a or
Luke 2:41-51a

Or

[no. 559] From Feast of St. Joseph the Worker (May 1)

First Reading
Genesis 1:26-2:3 or
Colossians 3:14-15, 17, 23-24

Responsorial Psalm
Psalm 90:2, 3-4, 12-13, 14 and 16

**Gospel**

Mathew 13:54-58

**Celebrations Around the Diocese**

**August 2020 - “Joseph and the Universal Church”**

- Opening Mass with Bishop Deshotel
  St. Joseph (Patterson)
  Sunday, August 16 at 9:00am

- Evening Prayer with Bishop Deshotel
  Cathedral (Lafayette)
  Sunday, August 16 at 6:00pm

- Parish Mission
  St. Leo the Great (Lafayette)
  Wednesday, August 19 and Thursday, August 20 at 6:30pm

- Parish Mission
  St. Joseph (Ville Platte)
  Saturday, August 22 at 6:00pm

**September 2020 - “Tutor of Christ: Joseph and Catechesis”**

- Parish Mission
  St. Joseph (Evangeline)
  Tuesday, September 1 at 5:00pm

- West Deanery Celebration
  St. Joseph (Rayne)
  Thursday, September 3 at 6:00pm

**October 2020 - “Husband of Mary: Marian Devotion”**

- St. Joseph Week
  Catholic Schools across the Diocese
  Monday, October 12 – Friday, October 16

- Parish Mission
  St. Joseph (Patterson)
  Tuesday, October 17 at 6:30pm
November 2020 - “Patron of the Dying”

- Parish Mission
  St. Joseph (Milton)
  Wednesday, November 4 at 5:30pm

- Triduum on the Life of St. Joseph Sponsored by South Deanery
  St. Peter (New Iberia)
  Tuesday, November 10 – Thursday, November 12 at 6:30pm

December 2020 - “Son of David: Joseph and the Covenant”

- Parish Mission
  St. Joseph (Iota)
  Wednesday, December 2 and Thursday, December 3 at 6:00pm

- North Deanery Celebration
  St. Anthony (Eunice)
  Wednesday, December 30 at 6:00pm

January 2021 - “Take Your Family: Joseph and the Vulnerable”

- Parish Mission
  St. Joseph (Rayne)
  Thursday, January 14 at 6:00pm

February 2021 - “Joseph and Marriage”

- Parish Mission
  St. Joseph (Centerville)
  TBD

March 2021 - “Joseph the Worker: Dignity of Labor”

- Parish Mission
  St. Joseph (Parks)
  Friday, March 19 at 6:00pm

April 2021 - “Joseph and Fatherhood”

- Parish Mission
  St. Joseph (Loreauville)
  Sunday, April 11 at 3:00pm

May 2021

- Closing Mass and Celebration with Bishop Deshotel
  St. Joseph (Milton)
  Saturday, May 1 at 10:00am-1:00pm
Other Events

- First Wednesday Mass
  St. Joseph (Loreauville)
  First Wednesdays at 6:00pm (other Wednesdays at 6:45am)

- Consecration to St. Joseph
  St. Joseph (Cecilia)
  Wednesday February 17 - Thursday, March 19
III. PRAYERS AND LITURGY

Hymns

“By the Creator Joseph Was Appointed”

1. By the Creator, Joseph was appointed
2. Christ in whose presence hosts of hell must tremble,
3. To God eternal be all praise and glory,

spouse of the Virgin, guardian of th’Incarnate; he by his
Ruler of all things, Lord of earth and heaven, Monarch of
who to Saint Joseph gave supernatural honor; grant that we

caring ministered to Jesus,
monarchs, to his earthly father
also may like him be faithful

source of salvation.
freely was subject.
in our obedience.
“Dear Guardian of Mary”

Verse 1

Dear Guardian of Mary! dear nurse of her Child! Life's ways are full weary, the desert is wild. Bleak sands are all round us, no home can we see; Sweet Spouse of our Lady, we lean safe on thee. For thou to the pilgrim art father and guide, And Jesus and Mary felt safe at thy side. O Glorious Patron, secure shall I be, Sweet Spouse of our Lady, if thou stay with me! God chose thee for Jesus and Mary, wilt thou Forgive a poor exile for choosing thee now? There's no saint in heaven Saint Joseph, like thee, Sweet Spouse of our Lady, do thou plead for me.
Novenas and Prayers

LITANY OF ST. 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 Spirit, have mercy on us.
Holy Trinity, One God, have mercy on us.

Holy Mary, pray for us.

Saint Joseph, pray for us

Illustrious Scion of David, Light of Patriarchs, Spouse of the Mother of God, Chaste guardian of the Virgin, Foster-father of the Son of God, Watchful defender of Christ, Head of the Holy Family,

Joseph most just, Joseph most chaste, Joseph most prudent, Joseph most valiant, Joseph most obedient, Joseph most faithful,

Mirror of patience, Lover of poverty, Model of workmen, Example to parents, Guardian of virgins, Pillar of families, Solace of the afflicted, Hope of the sick, Patron of the dying, Terror of demons, Protector of the Church, pray for us.

Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world, spare us, O Lord.
Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world, graciously hear us, O Lord.
Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

V. He made him lord over his house, R. And the ruler of all his possessions.

Let us pray.

Lord Jesus Christ, by your ineffable providence you chose saint Joseph to be the spouse of your most holy Mother: grant, we beseech you, that we may have him for an intercessor in heaven, as we venerate him as our protector on earth. You who live and reign forever and ever. R. Amen.
To you, O Blessed Joseph, we come in our trials, and having asked the help of your most holy spouse, we confidently ask your patronage also. Through that sacred bond of charity which united you to the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God and through the fatherly love with which you embraced the Child Jesus, we humbly beg you to look graciously upon the beloved inheritance which Jesus Christ purchased by his blood, and to aid us in our necessities with your power and strength.

O most provident guardian of the Holy Family, defend the chosen children of Jesus Christ. Most beloved father, dispel the evil of falsehood and sin. Our most mighty protector, graciously assist us from heaven in our struggle with the powers of darkness. And just as you once saved the Child Jesus from mortal danger, so now defend God’s Holy Church from the snares of her enemies and from all adversity. Shield each one of us by your constant protection, so that, supported by your example and your help, we may be able to live a virtuous life, to die a holy death, and to obtain eternal happiness in heaven. Amen.

See appendix for further options
Liturgy

First Wednesday of Month Devotion

The Votive Mass of St. Joseph (Roman Missal, Votive Masses, no. 13) with its accompanying readings (Lectionary, vols. I or II, nos. 543 or 559) is to be celebrated on each first Wednesday of the month from August 16th through May 1st, with the exceptions of October 7th (the Memorial of Our Lady of the Rosary), November 4th (the Memorial of St. Charles Borromeo), and April 7th (Wednesday of the Octave of Easter). On weekdays, only one reading proceeds the Gospel.

[no. 543] From Solemnity of St. Joseph, Husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary (March 19)

First Reading
Samuel 7:4-5a, 12-14a, 16

Responsorial Psalm
Psalm 89:2, 4-5, 27, 29

Second Reading
4:13, 16-18, 22

Gospel
Mathew 1:16, 18-21, 24a or Luke 2:41-51a

Or

[no. 559] From Feast of St. Joseph the Worker (May 1)

First Reading
Genesis 1:26-2:3 or Colossians 3:14-15, 17, 23-24

Responsorial Psalm
Psalm 90:2, 3-4, 12-13, 14 and 16

Gospel
Mathew 13:54-58

Holy Hour to St. Joseph

1. Expose the Blessed Sacrament after the First Wednesday Mass
2. Incense and “O Saving Victim”, “O Salutaris”
3. Read Gospel from Mk 1:16, 18-21, 24a or LK 2:41-51a
4. Period of Silence
5. Recite Litany of St. Joseph (See Prayers and Liturgy section)
6. Recite Prayer to Saint Joseph after the Litany (See Prayers and Liturgy section)
7. Sing hymn of St. Joseph (See Prayers and Liturgy section)
8. Incense and “Tantum Ergo”, “Down in Adoration”
9. “You have given them bread from Heaven…”
10. Prayer of St. Thomas, “O God, who in this wonderful…”
11. Blessing with the Monstrance
12. The Divine Praises and Reposition
13. “Holy God We praise Thy Name”
IV. INDULGENCES

On January 21 and April 16, 2020 Bishop Deshotel petitioned the Apostolic Penitentiary to grant a plenary indulgence to those who visit any of the 13 churches or mission chapels in the Diocese of Lafayette dedicated to St. Joseph. This assumes the fulfilling of the usual canonical requirements for a plenary indulgence:

- Visiting a church where the indulgence applies
- Praying during that visit for the Holy Father’s intentions
- Receiving Holy Communion and making a sacramental confession within 20 days of the visit to the church
- Being free from all attachment to sin, even venial sin

It has been requested that this plenary indulgence be granted during the first Saturdays of each month and on the 19th of each month during the anniversary year starting August 16, 2020 and concluding May 1, 2021. The request was forwarded to the Holy See on April 22, 2020.
V. ACTIVITIES AND IDEAS

St. Joseph Work Day Template

Preparation:
• Pinpoint work needs on the church property or within a nearby neighborhood as well as necessary tools. Ask volunteers to provide what is needed.
• Designate a coordinator to run the projects and set the date for the work day
• Advertise work day in church bulletin and online at start of Year of St. Joseph. Include in bulletin weekly.
• Be sure to emphasize that participants may come when they are able, stay as long as they are able, and may leave when needed.

Start at Church: 9:00 a.m.
• The day begins with coffee and donuts followed by prayer and song. The day’s work should be offered to St. Joseph. (See Prayers and Liturgy section or the appendix for options).
• Break up into teams for the work and a coordinator runs the projects.

Midday Prayers in Teams: 11:45 a.m.

Mass Followed by Lunch: 12:00 p.m.
• Participants may bring their own lunch or the parish may provide a meal through the help of volunteers.

Day Ends: 3:00 p.m.
• All participants end at the Church for a quick recap of the day and a closing prayer.
• Offer gift bags with traditional fava beans and a prayer card to each participant.
• Tools should be returned to owners.

St. Joseph’s Altar

Short History of the St. Joseph’s Altar

St. Joseph is the patron saint of Sicily and his table is a tradition dating back to the Middle Ages when Sicily was under a severe drought. Unable to grow any crops, countless people died during the famine. The peasants prayed to St. Joseph to intercede with God on their behalf. They promised St. Joseph that if God caused it to rain, they would hold a special feast honoring him. Indeed, the rains came and the crops were planted. With the harvest, the people prepared the promised feast.

Saint Joseph is also the patron saint of the poor, homeless, and unwed mothers. Thus, the St. Joseph’s table by tradition should be open to everyone. The traditions, symbols, and menus are all very important to the feast, but may vary according to where in Sicily a family originated.

The tradition was brought to the US in the late 19th and early 20th centuries by Sicilian immigrants who mostly settled in Louisiana, Texas, California, Colorado, New Jersey, and New York.
How to Establish a St. Joseph’s Altar

1. Establish intentions for the Feast Day and Altar. For example, will you have a Feast Mass in the morning or evening? Will you share the St. Joseph’s Novena leading up to the feast day? Review the history of the Altar to stimulate creative thought and establish a tradition for your Church. Establish the venue of your feast day.

2. Start a small committee with parishioners that desire to be blessed with the graces of St. Joseph’s intercession. The Altar is about homage, community, and charity. A group of 10-12 can establish your first year Altar and create great camaraderie. Meeting once a month is sufficient leading up to the feast day to coordinate activities.

3. Build a 3-tier wooden structure to be used as the center of your Altar. The three steps of the Altar symbolize a “stairway to Heaven” – representing the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Altar should have multiple tables covered with tablecloths to display the breads, statues, cakes, and flowers.

4. Acquire a large framed picture or statue of St. Joseph as the focal point centered on the Altar. Also, acquire a Sicilian flag or red and green fabric to acknowledge the first Sicilian St. Joseph’s Altar.

5. Order a St. Joseph’s prayer card to provide to visitors of the Altar. It is customary to provide guests with a small gift to take home. Many use brown paper gift bags into which you put a few fava beans, a St. Joseph’s prayer card, a small roll, and an orange, which is a symbol of good health and prosperity.

6. About a month out, publish in your bulletin and post on social media the hours of the Altar as well as needed donations such as holy items, fruit, vegetables, and cash to purchase items for your Altar.

7. Establish a St. Joseph’s Altar baking team to make the cakes and breads to be displayed on the Altar. There are many symbols that can be displayed on the Altar – cross-shaped cakes, lamb cakes, breads formed into a hammer, nail, crown of thorns, St. Joseph’s staff, or lily.

8. About 1 week out, collect items from parishioners to decorate the Altar - lace tablecloths, votive candles, statues, dried fava beans, vases displaying wheat or pasta, and holy items.

9. Establish the Altar about 2 days out from the feast day. Have your cakes, breads, and dyed eggs delivered. Place the Altar tables, cover with tablecloths/lace, add statues, framed Holy pictures, floral arrangements with lilies, cakes, breads, fruits and vegetables, such as citrus, grapes, apples, pears, figs, fava beans, eggplant, zucchini, red peppers, and dyed eggs. Place a table with paper, pens, and basket for visitors of the Altar to write petitions for St. Joseph’s intercession.

10. On the day of your feast Mass, the priest should bless the Altar. Have your committee provide small tours, share the history of the Altar, and provide the gift bags with the fava beans and prayer card to each visitor.

There are many traditions associated with St. Joseph’s feast day, such as the Altar, Novena, feast meal/table, and the “Tupa, Tupa”.

VI. PARISH PILGRIMAGE SITES

Church Hours

North Deanery:
St. Joseph, Plaisance
  Church Hours: By appointment/request
St. Joseph, Ville Platte
  Church Hours: By appointment/request

South Deanery:
St. Joseph, Centerville
  Church Hours: By appointment/request
St. Joseph, Loreauville
  Church Hours: By appointment/request
St. Joseph, Patterson
  Church Hours: M-TH 8:00am - 3:00pm; F 8:00am - 12:00pm

West Deanery:
St. Joseph, Evangeline
  Church Hours: T-TH 9:00am - 2:00pm
St. Joseph, Iota
  Church Hours: 24/7
St. Joseph, Maurice
  Church Hours: TH-F 3:30-6:00pm
St. Joseph, Rayne
  Church Hours: M-TH 8:00am - 4:00pm; F 8:00am - 12:00pm

Central Deanery:
St. Joseph, Broussard
  Church Hours: By appointment/request
St. Joseph, Cecilia
  Church Hours: By appointment/request
St. Joseph, Milton
  Church Hours: M- F: 7:00am - 5:00pm
St. Joseph, Parks
  Church Hours: By appointment/request
Catholic Schools St. Joseph Week (October 12-16) Template

Day 1 – Adore
- Place a St. Joseph picture in a prominent place in the school or highlight existing St. Joseph statues/pictures.
- Celebrate Votive Mass of St. Joseph (see Prayers and Liturgy section).
- Follow mass with a Holy Hour to St. Joseph and/or a chaplet of St. Joseph (see Prayers and Liturgy section).
- Establish a St. Joseph’s Altar in the gym.
  - Organize each class to provide holy items, fruit, vegetables etc..
  - Coordinate classes to pray rosary at the altar throughout the day.
  - Educate students on the history of St. Joseph Altars and other devotions.

Day 2 – Obey
- Invite priests, religious, and consecrated persons to speak about vocations in the Church.
- Educate students on the role of the evangelical counsels in the spiritual life, giving special emphasis to St. Joseph and obedience.
- Organize groups of students to pray for vocations throughout the day in the school chapel or in religion class.

Day 3 – Serve
- Organize a work day around the school campus.
  - Pinpoint needs around the campus or nearby community.
  - Designate leaders to acquire materials and tools needed for necessary work
  - Educate students on the dignity and redemptive value of work.
- Have students write thank you letters to service men and women in the community including military veterans, police officers, and medical professionals.

Catechetical Template for Faith Formation

- Read one or all Gospel passages where St. Joseph is mentioned. For older students, read the Old Testament counterpart and discuss how the New Testament is the fulfillment of the Old.

Gospel of Mathew
1:1-17 Genealogy
  1: 1:18-25 Parentage, Joseph’s Vocation - Is 7:14
  2: 2:1-12 Herod, Magi, Bethlehem - Mic 5:2
  3: 2:13-15 Flight into Egypt - Hos 11:1
  4: 2:16-18 Massacre of Innocents - Jer 31:15
  5: 2:19-23 From Egypt to Nazareth - Is 4:3

Objective: Highlight Joseph’s role as father, provider, protector, obedient servant, righteous man, laborer, and husband of Mary.
Activity: Discuss Joseph’s roles and then have students create and perform a skit based on any of the above passages. Students should highlight the roles of Joseph as discussed.
Objective: Highlight the symbols of St. Joseph and their meaning. Example: In art, Joseph is typically portrayed as an older man and is shown with the attributes of a carpenter’s square or tools, the infant Jesus, his lily blossomed staff, two turtle doves, or a spikenard.

Activity: Bring a picture, icon or statue of Joseph and explain the meaning behind its features. Have students color a picture portraying these symbols.

Objective: Highlight the silence of Joseph.
Activity: Separate students into teams. Give one team a phrase and the other team materials to draw out the phrase. Students must communicate and portray the phrase in complete silence while the other group draws it out in silence. Discuss the importance and difficulty of silence in the Christian life and in the life of Joseph. One can also promote any activity of the day to be done in silence.

Objective: Highlight the adoration of Joseph.
Activity: Introduce students to Eucharistic adoration in a nearby chapel. Discuss before and after the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist and the adoration Joseph gave to his son.

Objective: Highlight the service and work of Joseph.
Activity 1: Have students color pictures of different carpentry tools and then brainstorm different tools that are used in the Christian life to get to Heaven (i.e. prayer, sacraments etc.).
Activity 2: Break students into teams and have them silently clean the classroom before leaving. Discuss the dignity of work and its importance in the Christian life.

See link for more ideas, printouts, and activity templates:
https://drive.google.com/drive/u/2/folders/1ReIMH-o10y-6CgEWFqs6PWXTNz1pscl9
Ite ad Joseph (Go to Joseph)
Pastoral Letter Inaugurating the Year of St. Joseph

To the Priests and Deacons, Members of Consecrated Life,
And Lay Faithful of the Diocese of Lafayette

“Go to Joseph” (Gen. 41:55). In time of trial and distress, when all of Egypt and the entire world became hungry and cried out for food, Pharaoh told the Egyptians, “Go to Joseph, and do whatever he tells you” (Gen. 41:55). The Old Testament Joseph, the beloved son of the patriarch, is a type of St. Joseph. Exiled to Egypt, Joseph was entrusted with the king’s treasures and under his apt administration they were protected and increased. When famine struck, the whole world came to Joseph to receive food. In a much more sublime and supernatural way, St. Joseph found favor with his heavenly Father and was entrusted with the Father’s greatest treasures, Jesus and Mary (cf. Quamquam pluries). During turbulent times in the Church and world, this truth inspired Pope Pius IX to “go to Joseph” by proclaiming St. Joseph Patron of the Universal Church (Quemadmodum Deus). As we enter the 150th anniversary of that declaration, I too would like to “go to Joseph” by inaugurating a Year of St. Joseph in the Diocese of Lafayette, beginning March 19, 2020 and concluding March 19, 2021. It is my desire that in the difficult times we find ourselves today, we might go to St. Joseph for his help and protection and learn from his example how to become better disciples.

St. Matthew attests to the holiness of St. Joseph when he describes him as “a righteous man” (Mt. 1:19). This holiness accrues from the marriage of Joseph to Mary, the Immaculate Mother of God. Joseph is told “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” (Mt. 1:20). By “taking into his home” Mary and the divine child, Joseph embraced the mystery of Mary’s divine maternity and with it the mystery of the Incarnation. In freely assuming his dignity as husband of Mary, foster father of the Incarnate Word, and head of the holy family, Joseph was truly sanctified. St. Joseph’s unique share in the mystery of holiness was recognized by the Church and a greater devotion to St. Joseph developed with the passage of time. St. Teresa of Avila in the 16th century boasted never to have been refused anything through the intercession of St. Joseph. St. John XXIII inserted the name of St. Joseph in the Roman Canon immediately following the Blessed Virgin Mary and before the apostles Peter and Paul. Pope Francis did the same for the other Eucharistic Prayers. St. John Paul II affirms the unique holiness of St. Joseph stating that he participated in the mystery of the Incarnation “like no other human being except Mary, the Mother of the Incarnate Word” (Redemptoris Custos, 1). We can thus have great confidence and “go to Joseph” with our needs and concerns.

The Year of St. Joseph will offer many opportunities for beseeching St. Joseph’s intercession and entrusting ourselves to his protection. There will be pilgrimages to the 13 churches of St. Joseph in our diocese. I am also asking these parishes to host conferences on the various titles and virtues of St. Joseph in order to increase our devotion. Various activities will be held at the level of the Diocese, deanery, parish, and family. The Year of St. Joseph will afford a wealth of reflection, prayer and study. Nonetheless, I would like to briefly highlight some qualities of St. Joseph’s life which I believe are relevant for our times.

St. Joseph is a man of deep prayer. As head of the Holy Family it would have been St. Joseph’s responsibility to lead common prayers in the family and before meals. He gathered the family for the Sabbath synagogue services and led the frequent pilgrimages on feasts to the temple in Jerusalem (Lk. 2:41). It was Joseph’s duty to name the child on the occasion of its circumcision and to redeem the first-born son 40 days after birth (Lk. 2:21-22). In addition to his liturgical and family prayer, Joseph is a model of personal prayer. His complete surrender to the will of God in silence can only be explained from a deep interior life. St. Joseph prayed in darkness as he contemplated a course of action when learning of Mary’s pregnancy (Mt. 1:19), when unable to find room in the inn for her to give birth (Lk. 2:7), when leaving by night for Egypt to escape Herod’s attempt on the child’s life (Mt. 2:13, 22) and when searching helplessly for the lost child (Lk. 2:45). In this Year of St. Joseph, we go to Joseph to ask commitment to daily personal and family prayer. I would ask that if possible, we could all offer a daily prayer to St. Joseph. And let us ask St. Joseph to help all Catholics to return to Sunday Mass and the Sacraments.

St. Joseph is a “doer of the word” (cf. James 1:23). Three times in Sacred Scripture we hear that Joseph heard the word of the Lord in a dream (Mt. 1:20, 2:13, 22) and each time Joseph arose and “did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him” (Mt. 1:24). Despite his own plans and the difficulty that the will of God entailed, Joseph surrendered his entire life to God’s will and fully embraced his
privileged but arduous role as husband of Mary and foster father of Jesus. No words of Joseph are recorded in the Bible. We are simply told that Joseph heard, rose, and did what God asked. The way of Joseph is the way of listening in prayer and doing in action. St. Joseph harmonized the life of prayer and action (cf. Redemptoris Custos, 26). During the Year of St. Joseph, let us go to Joseph and learn how to surrender ourselves to God’s loving plan for us. Let us, like him, listen attentively in prayer and then with God’s grace rise and become doers of the word.

**St. Joseph is the provider for the Holy Family.** Jesus and Mary needed housing, food, and clothing and it was Joseph who provided for these necessities. The Gospel of Matthew identifies Joseph’s trade when it recounts Jesus’ return to his native place and the offense that his own people took at him: “Is he not the carpenter’s son?” (Mt. 13:55). We can rightly assume that many of Jesus’ hidden years in Nazareth were spent at St. Joseph’s side in his carpenter shop. Joseph taught Jesus his trade and Jesus himself was referred to as a carpenter, “Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary?” (Mk. 6:3). The Son of God labored alongside St. Joseph with hammer and chisel. In such fashion work was redeemed and its dignity elevated. With confidence then we can go to Joseph for help in finding work to obtain an honest living. Like St. Joseph let us spend time with our young, teaching them how to work, and giving them an appreciation for its redemptive value.

**St. Joseph is protector of Mary and the Child Jesus.** When the angry Herod ordered the massacre of all male children two years old and younger, it was to St. Joseph that the angel of the Lord was sent. Joseph took the child and His mother and fled into Egypt and thus thwarted the attempt on Jesus’ life (Mt. 2:13-15). We too go to Joseph for protection for our families and for our Diocese. Additionally, let us imitate St. Joseph in our efforts to protect the vulnerable, the unborn, the young, the sick and the elderly from all harm – physical, spiritual, and emotional. Jesus was safe under the protection of St. Joseph. May all those entrusted to our care be safe as well.

**St. Joseph is a model of chastity.** The Church invokes St. Joseph in the Litany of St. Joseph as “Joseph Most Chaste” and in the Divine Praises as Mary’s “Most Chaste Spouse.” Joseph was called to give Mary a husband’s tender love and yet to be the guardian of her divine maternity and virginity. Through the grace of the Holy Spirit he was able to surrender his life and place it at the service of a love that was both spousal and virginal. He “took Mary into his home, while respecting the fact that she belonged exclusively to God” (Redemptoris Custos, 20). This was possible because of the purity of his love. In our present time of sexual promiscuity and unchastity, addiction to pornography and marital infidelity, let us go to Joseph to learn and obtain the courage to be chaste. I encourage all to turn to Joseph in their struggles. During this Year of St. Joseph, let us pray to him for a return of the great Christian virtue of chastity.

Our situation in the Church and world today is not unlike the situation of God’s people during the great famine in Egypt. We need heavenly power to safeguard and steer us through the many trials of our day. It is my fervent hope that during this Year of St. Joseph every Catholic in the Diocese of Lafayette may fervently and confidently “Go to Joseph” for his intercession, his protection, and his example.

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My sincere thanks to Reverend Michael Champagne, CJC, for his assistance in preparing this pastoral.

St. Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church, pray for us and pray for the Diocese of Lafayette!

With every good wish, I am

Faithfully yours in Christ

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Most Reverend J. Douglas Deshotel, D.D.
Bishop of Lafayette
IX. Appendix

Additional Prayers

FOR EMPLOYMENT

Saint Joseph, you were yourself once faced with the responsibility of providing the necessities of life for Jesus and Mary. Look down with fatherly compassion upon me in my anxiety over my present inability to support my family. Please help me to find gainful employment very soon, so that this heavy burden of concern will be lifted from my heart and that I am soon able to provide for those whom God has entrusted to my care. Help us to guard against bitterness and discouragement, so that we may emerge from this trial spiritually enriched and with even greater blessings from God. Amen.

FOR THE GRACE OF PURITY

Saint Joseph, father and guardian of virgins, to whose faithful keeping Christ Jesus, innocence itself, and Mary, the virgin of virgins was entrusted, I pray and beseech you by that twofold and most precious charge, to save me from all uncleanness, to keep my mind untainted, my heart and body pure in my vocation; and to help me always to serve Jesus and Mary in perfect purity. Amen.

FOR A HAPPY DEATH

O Glorious Saint Joseph, I choose you today for my special patron in life and at the hour of my death. Preserve and increase in me the spirit of prayer and fervor in the service of God. Remove far from me every kind of sin; obtain for me that my death may not come upon me unawares, but that I may have time to confess my sins sacramentally and to bewail them with a most perfect understanding and a most sincere and perfect contrition, in order that I may breathe forth my soul into the hands of Jesus and Mary. Amen.

FOR RESPECT FOR LIFE

Saint Joseph, you are the chaste and loving spouse of the Virgin Mary, the foster father of Jesus, the protector and provider of the Holy Family and of all families. We have complete confidence in your loving care for new life and in your fidelity to the family. We commend our efforts to your prayers and protection. Help us always to defend the gift of human life that it may grow to the abundance of eternal life promised and bestowed on us by your son, our brother, Jesus Christ. Amen.

FOR THE FAMILY AND THE HOME

Saint Joseph, protect our home. Pour forth from heaven blessings on our family. Remain in our midst. Help us to live in love and harmony, in peace and joy. May the wholesome fear of God strengthen us that virtue may adorn what we do and our way may lead to heaven.

To you this day I give the key to our dwelling place. Lock out all things that could do us harm. Lock my home and my loved ones with me in the hearts of Jesus and Mary. This I beg of you, that our days may be like your days in the holy home at Nazareth. Amen.
THANKSGIVING PRAYER FOR A NEWBORN CHILD

O Saint Joseph, you witnessed the miracle of birth, seeing the infant Jesus born of your most holy spouse, the Virgin Mary. With wonder and awe, you took into your arms the Savior. With gratitude that only a parent can know, you glorified God for the birth of his Son, entrusted to your fatherly care.

Like you, Saint Joseph, I too give praise and glory to God for the birth of my child. This child’s life is such a miraculous testimony of God’s loving presence. My heart is filled with grateful joy. Join me dear Saint Joseph, in offering thanks to God for the gift of my child.

What great trust and confidence God placed in you, Saint Joseph, by entrusting his only Son into your fatherly care. This inspires me to entrust the spiritual care and protection of my newborn child into your competent and loving hands. Teach, guide, and support me to fulfill well my awesome vocation to be a worthy parent to this child. Amen.

PRAYER OF SAINT JOSEPH MARELLO

O Glorious Saint Joseph, after the Blessed Virgin, you were the first to hold in your arms the Redeemer. Be our exemplar in our ministry, which like your own, is a ministry of intimate relationship with the Divine Word. May you teach us; may you assist us; may you make us worthy members of the Holy Family. Amen.

ANGELUS OF SAINT JOSEPH

V. The angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream.
R. “Joseph, Son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary, your wife, into your home.”

V. “For that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.”
R. “And she shall bring forth a son.”

V. “And you shall call his name Jesus.”
R. “Because He is the one who is to save his people from their sins.”

V. Pray for us, O virgin father of Jesus.
R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray.

Pour forth we beseech you, O Lord, your grace into our hearts; that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son was made known by the message of an angel, may by his passion and cross be brought to the glory of his resurrection. Through the same Christ our Lord
R. Amen.
CHAPLET OF SAINT JOSEPH

This chaplet may be prayed using a Marian rosary. On each large bead, the Lord’s Prayer is said. On each small bead the following prayer is said:

Joseph, son of David, and husband of Mary; we honor you, guardian of the Redeemer, and we adore the child you named Jesus.

Saint Joseph, patron of the universal church, pray for us, that like you we may live totally dedicated to the interests of the Savior. Amen.

This chaplet may be concluded with any suitable prayer to St. Joseph, such as the following:

Grant, we pray, almighty God, that by Saint Joseph’s intercession your Church may constantly watch over the unfolding of the mysteries of human salvation, whose beginnings you entrusted to his faithful care. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. R. Amen.

MYSTERIES FOR EACH DECADE

Betrothal of Saint Joseph to the Blessed Virgin Mary

(Mt 1:18) 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.

Annunciation to Saint Joseph

(Mt 1:19-21) Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly. Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "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."

Birth and Naming of the Lord Jesus

(Mt 1:22-25) All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means "God is with us." When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home. He had no relations with her until she bore a son, and he named him Jesus.

Flight into Egypt of the Holy Family

(Mt 2:13-15) 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. He stayed there until the death of Herod, that what the Lord had said through the prophet might be fulfilled, "Out of Egypt I called my son."

Hidden Life at Nazareth

(Mt 2:19-23) When Herod had died, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." He rose, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. 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. He went and dwelt in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, "He shall be called a Nazorean."

(Lk 2:51-52) He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age and favor before God and man.

DEVOTION OF THE 7 JOYS AND 7 SORROWS OF SAINT JOSEPH

Mediation: Chaste Lover of Mary, how overwhelmed you were when you thought that you would have to end your betrothal to her. But when the angel of God came to you in a dream, you were filled with awe to realize that Mary would be your wife, and you would be the guardian of the Messiah.

Prayer:

Help us Saint Joseph,
help our families and all our loved ones
to overcome all sadness of heart
and develop an absolute trust in God's goodness.

[optional: Our Father and Hail Mary, or any other suitable prayer]

Mediation: Faithful guardian of Jesus, what a failure you thought you were when you could only provide a stable for the birth of the Holy Child. And then what a wonder it was when shepherds came to tell of angel choirs, and wise men came to adore the King of Kings.

Prayer:

Through your example and prayers,
help us Saint Joseph and all we love
to become like sinless mangers
where the Savior of the world may be received
with absolute love and respect.

[optional: Our Father and Hail Mary, or any other suitable prayer]
Mediation: Tender-hearted Joseph, you too felt pain when the blood of Jesus was first shed at His circumcision. Yet how proud you were to be the one privileged to give the name Jesus, Savior, to the very Son of God.

Prayer:

Pray for us Saint Joseph,
that the sacred blood of Christ,
poured out for our salvation,
may guard our families,
so the Divine Name of Jesus
may be written in our hearts forever.

[optional: Our Father and Hail Mary, or any other suitable prayer]

Mediation: Joseph, loving husband, how bewildered you were when Simeon spoke the words of warning that the hearts of Jesus and Mary would be pierced with sorrows. Yet his prediction that this would lead to the salvation of innumerable souls filled you with consolation.

Prayer:

Help us, Saint Joseph,
to see with eyes of faith
that even the sorrows and pains of those we deeply love
can become the pathway to salvation and eternal life.

[optional: Our Father and Hail Mary, or any other suitable prayer]

Mediation: Courageous protector of the Holy Family, how terrified you were when you had to make the sudden flight with Jesus and Mary to escape the treachery of King Herod and the cruelty of his soldiers. But when you reached Egypt, what satisfaction you had to know that the Savior of the world had come to replace the pagan idols.

Prayer:

Teach us by your example, Saint Joseph,
to keep far from the false idols of earthly attractions,
so that like you,
we may be entirely devoted to the service of Jesus and Mary.

[optional: Our Father and Hail Mary, or any other suitable prayer]

Mediation: Ever-obedient Joseph, you trustingly returned to Nazareth at God's command, in spite of your fear that King Herod's son might still be a threat to Jesus' life. Then what fatherly pride you had in seeing Jesus grow in wisdom and grace before God and men under your care.

Prayer:

Show us St. Joseph,
how to be free from all useless fear and worry,
so we may enjoy the peace of a tranquil conscience,
living safely with Jesus in our hearts.

[optional: Our Father and Hail Mary, or any other suitable prayer]

Mediation: Dependable father and husband, how frantic you and Mary were when, through no fault of yours, you searched for three days to find Jesus. What incredible relief was yours when you found Him safe in the Temple of God.

Prayer:

Help us Saint Joseph,
never to lose Jesus through the fault of our own sins.
But if we should lose him,
lead us back with unwearied sorrow,
until we find Him again;
so that we, like you, may finally pass from this life,
dying safely in the arms of Jesus and Mary.

Final Prayer

O blessed Saint Joseph, tender-hearted father,
faithful guardian of Jesus, chaste spouse of the Mother of God,
I pray and beseech you to offer to God the Father
my praise to him through his divine Son,
who died on the cross and rose again
to give us sinners new life.
Through the holy name of Jesus, pray with us
that we may obtain from the eternal Father,
the favor we ask . . . (Pause) . . .
We have been unfaithful to the unfailing love of God the Father;
beg of Jesus mercy for us.
Amid the splendors of God’s loving presence,
do not forget the sorrows of those who suffer,
those who pray, those who weep.
By your prayers and those of your most holy spouse, our Blessed Lady,
may the love of Jesus answer our call of confident hope. Amen.

Ant. And Jesus himself, when he began his work, was about thirty years old being, as was supposed, the son of Joseph.

V. Pray for us, holy Joseph.
R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray.

Father,
you entrusted our Savior to the care of Saint Joseph.
By the help of his prayers
may your Church continue to serve its Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. R. Amen.

CHAPLET OF THE HOLY SPOUSES

This chaplet may be prayed using a Marian rosary. On each large bead, the Lord’s Prayer is said. On each small bead the following prayer is said:

Mary, full of grace, and Joseph, son of David; honor to you, Mother of God, and to you, guardian of the Redeemer. Eternal praise to the Child with whom you formed a family, Jesus.

Holy spouses, pray for us sinners, our families and communities, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

This chaplet may be concluded with any suitable prayer to Holy Spouses, such as the following:

Holy Father, you joined together by a virginal bond the glorious Mother of your Son and the just man, Saint Joseph, that they might be faithful cooperators in the mystery of the Word Incarnate. Grant that we who are united with you by the bond of baptism may live more intimately our union with Christ and may walk more joyfully in the way of love. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. R. Amen.

MYSTERIES

Betrothal of Mary and Joseph

(Mt 1:18) 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.

Annunciation to Mary

(Lk 1:28-35, 38) In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin’s name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, "Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you." But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne
of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." But Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?" And the angel said to her in reply, "The holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Annunciation to Joseph

(Mt 1:19-21) Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly. Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "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."

Joseph takes Mary as his wife

(Mt 1:22-25) All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means "God is with us." When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home. He had no relations with her until she bore a son, and he named him Jesus.

Birth of Jesus

(Lk 2:3-7,15-16) Joseph too went up from Galilee from the town of Nazareth to Judea, to the city of David that is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. While they were there, the time came for her to have her child and she gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

When the angels went away from them to heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go, then, to Bethlehem to see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went in haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger.

Circumcision and Naming of Jesus

(Lk 2:21) When eight days were completed for his circumcision, he was named Jesus, the name given him by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

Presentation of Jesus

(Lk 2:22-40) When the days were completed for purification according to the law of Moses, they took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, just as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every male that opens the womb shall be consecrated to the Lord," and to offer the sacrifice of "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons," in accordance with the dictate in the law of the Lord. Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. This man was righteous and devout, awaiting the consolation of Israel, and the holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Messiah of the Lord. He came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child
Jesus to perform the custom of the law in regard to him, he took him into his arms and blessed God. He came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to perform the custom of the law in regard to him, he took him into his arms and blessed God, saying: "Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in sight of all the peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel." The child’s father and mother were amazed at what was said about him; He said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be contradicted and you yourself a sword will pierce so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived seven years with her husband after her marriage, and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple, but worshiped night and day with fasting and prayer. And coming forward at that very time, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were awaiting the redemption of Jerusalem. When they had fulfilled all the prescriptions of the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

Escape into Egypt

(Mt 2:13-15) 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. He stayed there until the death of Herod, that what the Lord had said through the prophet might be fulfilled, "Out of Egypt I called my son."

Finding of Jesus in the Temple

(Lk 2:41-50) Each year the parents of Jesus went to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, and when he was twelve years old, they went up according to festival custom. After they had completed its days, as they were returning, the boy Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Thinking that he was in the caravan, they journeyed for a day and looked for him among their relatives and acquaintances, but not finding him, they returned to Jerusalem to look for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions, and all who heard him were astounded at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him, they were astonished, and his mother said to him, "Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been looking for you with great anxiety." And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?" But they did not understand what he said to them.

Hidden Life at Nazareth

(Lk 2:51-52) Jesus went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age and favor before God and man.
Scriptural Novena to St. Joseph

St. Joseph Church
Rayne, Louisiana
1. O blessed Saint Joseph, how great was thy worth, The one chosen shadow of God upon earth, The father of Jesus! Ah, then, wilt thou be, Sweet spouse of our Lady! a father to me?

2. For thou to the pilgrim art father and guide, And Jesus and Joseph, how safe I should be, Sweet spouse of our Lady! if thou wert with me!

3. When the treasures of God were unsheltered on earth, Safe-keeping was found for them both in thy worth: O father of Jesus, be father to me, Sweet spouse of our Lady! and I will love thee.
I. The Creation of Man and Woman  
Genesis 2: 4b-8a, 15, 18-24  

When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens—there was no field shrub on earth and no grass of the field had sprouted, for the LORD God had sent no rain upon the earth and there was no man to till the ground, but a stream was welling up out of the earth and watering all the surface of the ground—then the LORD God formed the man out of the dust of the ground and blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. The LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east.  

The LORD God then took the man and settled him in the garden of Eden, to cultivate and care for it. The LORD God said: It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suited to him. So the LORD God formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds of the air, and he brought them to the man to see what he would call them; whatever the man called each living creature was then its name. The man gave names to all the tame animals, all the birds of the air, and all the wild animals; but none proved to be a helper suited to the man.  

So the LORD God cast a deep sleep on the man, and while he was asleep, he took out one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. The LORD God then built the rib that he had taken from the man into a woman. When he brought her to the man, the man said: “This one, at last, is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called ‘woman,’ for out of man this one has been taken.” That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one body.  

V. Mercy and faithfulness have met; justice and peace have kissed.  
R. Faithfulness shall spring from the earth and justice look down from heaven.
II. Joseph is Rejected by his Brothers  
Genesis 37: 3-8, 12-13, 17b-20, 23-28

Israel loved Joseph best of all his sons, for he was the child of his old age; and he had made him a long ornamented tunic. When his brothers saw that their father loved him best of all his brothers, they hated him so much that they could not say a kind word to him. Once Joseph had a dream; he said to them, “Listen to this dream I had. There we were, binding sheaves in the field, when suddenly my sheaf rose to an upright position, and your sheaves formed a ring around my sheaf and bowed down to it.” His brothers said to him, “Are you really going to make yourself king over us? Will you rule over us?” So they hated him all the more because of his dreams.

One day, when his brothers had gone to pasture their father’s flocks at Shechem, Israel said to Joseph, “Are your brothers not tending our flocks at Shechem? Come and I will send you to them.” “I am ready,” Joseph answered. So Joseph went after his brothers. They saw him from a distance, and before he reached them, they plotted to kill him. They said to one another: “Here comes that dreamer! Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the cisterns here; we could say that a wild beast devoured him. We will see then what comes of his dreams.” So when Joseph came up to his brothers, they stripped him of his tunic, the long ornamented tunic he had on; then they took him and threw him into the cistern. Then they sat down to eat. Looking up, they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, their camels laden with gum, balm, and resin to be taken down to Egypt. Judah said to his brothers: “What is to be gained by killing our brother and concealing his blood? Come, let us sell him to these Ishmaelites. After all, he is our brother, our own flesh.” His brothers agreed, and they pulled Joseph up out of the cistern. They sold Joseph for twenty pieces of silver to the Ishmaelites, who took him to Egypt.

V. Their enemies deserve to be deprived of light,  
those who imprisoned their sons;  
R. Through whom the imperishable Light of the Law was to be given into the world.
III. Joseph Saves the People
Genesis 41:38-44, 46-49, 53-57

Pharaoh asked his servants, “Could we find another like him, a man so endowed with the spirit of God?” So Pharaoh said to Joseph: “There is no one as discerning and wise as you are. You shall be in charge of my household, and all my people will obey your command. Only in respect to the throne will I outrank you. Look, I put you in charge of the whole land of Egypt.” With that, Pharaoh took off his signet ring and put it on Joseph’s finger. He dressed him in robes of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck. “I am Pharaoh,” he told Joseph, “but without your approval no one shall lift hand or foot in all the land of Egypt.” Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

After Joseph left Pharaoh, he went throughout the land of Egypt. During the seven years of plenty, when the land produced abundant crops, he collected all the food of these years of plenty that the land of Egypt was enjoying and stored it in the cities, placing in each city the crops of the fields around it. Joseph collected grain like the sands of the sea, so much that at last he stopped measuring it, for it was beyond measure. When the seven years of abundance enjoyed by the land of Egypt came to an end, the seven years of famine set in, just as Joseph had said. Although there was famine in all the other countries, food was available throughout the land of Egypt. When all the land of Egypt became hungry and the people cried to Pharaoh for food, Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians: “Go to Joseph and do whatever he tells you.” When the famine had spread throughout the land, Joseph opened all the cities that had grain and rationed it to the Egyptians, since the famine had gripped the land of Egypt. Indeed, the whole world came to Egypt to Joseph to buy grain, for famine had gripped the whole world.

V. God has made him a father to the king, and master over his household.
R. He raised him up, that he might save his people.
IV. David is Anointed King
1 Samuel 16:1, 3-7, 10-13a

The LORD said to Samuel: How long will you grieve for Saul, whom I have rejected as king of Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and be on your way. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for from among his sons I have decided on a king. Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I myself will tell you what to do; you are to anoint for me the one I point out to you.

Samuel did as the LORD had commanded him. When he entered Bethlehem, the elders of the city came trembling to meet him and asked, “Is your visit peaceful, O seer?” He replied: “Yes! I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. So purify yourselves and celebrate with me today.” He also had Jesse and his sons purify themselves and invited them to the sacrifice. As they came, he looked at Eliab and thought, “Surely the anointed is here before the LORD. But the LORD said to Samuel: Do not judge from his appearance or from his lofty stature, because I have rejected him. God does not see as a mortal, who sees the appearance. The LORD looks into the heart. In the same way Jesse presented seven sons before Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, “The LORD has not chosen any one of these.” Then Samuel asked Jesse, “Are these all the sons you have?” Jesse replied, “There is still the youngest, but he is tending the sheep.” Samuel said to Jesse, “Send for him; we will not sit down to eat until he arrives here.” Jesse had the young man brought to them. He was ruddy, a youth with beautiful eyes, and good looking. The LORD said: There—anoint him, for this is the one! Then Samuel, with the horn of oil in hand, anointed him in the midst of his brothers, and from that day on, the spirit of the LORD rushed upon David.

V. I have found David my servant;
R. And with my holy oil anointed him.
The word of the LORD came to Nathan: Go and speak thus to my servant David, thus says the LORD of hosts: “I took you from the pasture, from following the flock, to become ruler over my people Israel. I was with you wherever you went, and I cut down all your enemies before you. And I will make your name like that of the greatest on earth. I will assign a place for my people Israel and I will plant them in it to dwell there; they will never again be disturbed, nor shall the wicked ever again oppress them, as they did at the beginning, and from the day when I appointed judges over my people Israel. I will give you rest from all your enemies.”

Moreover, the LORD also declares to you that the LORD will make a house for you: “When your days have been completed and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring after you, sprung from your loins, and I will establish his kingdom. He it is who shall build a house for my name, and I will establish his royal throne forever. I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me. If he does wrong, I will reprove him with a human rod and with human punishments; but I will not withdraw my favor from him as I withdrew it from Saul who was before you. Your house and your kingdom are firm forever before me; your throne shall be firmly established forever.”

V. Happy the people who acclaim such a King;
R. Who walk, O Lord, in the light of your face.
Then David blessed the LORD in the sight of the whole assembly. David said: “Blessed are you, LORD, God of Israel our father, from eternity to eternity. Yours, LORD, are greatness and might, majesty, victory, and splendor. For all in heaven and on earth is yours; yours, LORD, is kingship; you are exalted as head over all. Riches and glory are from you, and you have dominion over all. In your hand are power and might; it is yours to give greatness and strength to all. Therefore, our God, we give you thanks and we praise the majesty of your name.

But who am I, and who are my people, that we should have the means to contribute so freely? For everything is from you, and what we give is what we have received from you. For before you we are strangers and travelers, like all our ancestors. Our days on earth are like a shadow, without a future.

LORD our God, all this wealth that we have brought together to build you a house for your holy name comes from you and is entirely yours. I know, my God, that you put hearts to the test and that you take pleasure in integrity. With a whole heart I have freely given all these things, and now with joy I have seen your people here present also giving to you generously. LORD, God of our ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, keep such thoughts in the hearts and minds of your people forever, and direct their hearts toward you. Give to my son Solomon a wholehearted desire to keep your commandments, precepts, and statutes, that he may carry out all these plans and build the palace for which I have made preparation.”

Then David told the whole assembly, “Now bless the LORD your God!” And the whole assembly blessed the LORD, the God of their ancestors, bowing down in homage before the LORD and before the king.

V. Glory and riches shall fill his house.
R. And his justice shall endure forever.
VII. The Annunciation to Joseph
Matthew 1:18-25

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. Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly. Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “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.” All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means “God is with us.” When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home. He had no relations with her until she bore a son, and he named him Jesus.

V. To fear the Lord is wisdom’s full measure;
she satisfies men with her fruits.

R. Those who fear the Lord will prepare their hearts
and humble themselves before Him.
The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him. Each year his parents went to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, and when he was twelve years old, they went up according to festival custom. After they had completed its days, as they were returning, the boy Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Thinking that he was in the caravan, they journeyed for a day and looked for him among their relatives and acquaintances, but not finding him, they returned to Jerusalem to look for him.

After three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions, and all who heard him were astounded at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him, they were astonished, and his mother said to him, “Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been looking for you with great anxiety.” And he said to them, “Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?” But they did not understand what he said to them. He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age and favor before God and man.

V. Your word is a lamp for my steps and a light for my path.

R. I have sworn and made up my mind to obey your decrees.
IX. The Life of the Church
Hebrews 13:1-8, 20-21

Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect hospitality, for through it some have unknowingly entertained angels. Be mindful of prisoners as if sharing their imprisonment, and of the ill-treated as of yourselves, for you also are in the body. Let marriage be honored among all and the marriage bed be kept undefiled, for God will judge the immoral and adulterers. Let your life be free from love of money but be content with what you have, for he has said, “I will never forsake you or abandon you.” Thus we may say with confidence: The Lord is my helper, and I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me? Remember your leaders who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

May the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep by the blood of the eternal covenant, Jesus our Lord, furnish you with all that is good, that you may do his will. May he carry out in you what is pleasing to him through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever; amen.

V. Well done, my good and faithful servant;
R. Come and share your Master’s joy.
Litany of St. Joseph

Lord, have mercy.
   R. Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
   R. Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.
   R. Lord, have mercy
Christ, hear us.
   R. Christ, graciously hear us.

God, the Father of Heaven,
   R. Have mercy on us. . . .
God, the Son, Redeemer of the world,
God, the Holy Spirit,
Holy Trinity, One God,

Holy Mary, Mother of God,
   R. Pray for us. . . .
St. Joseph,
Renowned offspring of David,
Light of Patriarchs,
Spouse of the Mother of God,
Chaste guardian of the Virgin,
Foster father of the Son of God,
Diligent protector of Christ,
Head of the Holy Family,

Joseph most just,
Joseph most chaste,
Joseph most prudent,
Joseph most strong,
Joseph most obedient,
Joseph most faithful,
Mirror of patience,
Lover of poverty,
Model of artisans,
Glory of home life,
Guardian of virgins,
Pillar of families,
Solace of the wretched,
Hope of the sick,
Patron of the dying,
Terror of demons,
Protector of Holy Church,

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
   R. Spare us, O Lord.
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
   R. Graciously hear us, O Lord.
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world.
   R. Have mercy on us.

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

Let us pray . . . [Novena Prayer]
Novena Prayer

To you, O blessed Joseph, we turn in our affliction, and with hearts filled with confidence, we place ourselves under your protection. By that charity with which you were united to the Virgin Mary, and by that fatherly love with which you cherished the Child Jesus, we beseech you, and humbly pray that you would look graciously upon the Church, born from the wounds of Christ, and help us in our need.

Defend, O watchful Guardian, these chosen brothers and sisters of Christ. Keep from us, O loving Father, all error and corruption. Help us, O brave man of justice, to resist the powers of darkness.

And even as of old you rescued the Child Jesus from threats upon His life, so now defend His Holy Church from the snare of all our enemies and from the deadly power of sin. Shelter us in your care, that, following your example and strengthened by your help, we may live a holy life, enjoy a happy death, and attain at last the everlasting joy of Heaven. Amen.