

## **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 1**

As we begin our journey to consecration today, we read from Luke 2:52 which states Jesus "increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man." Fr. Calloway tells us that such an increase can happen to us too, if we "entrust [ourselves] to the paternal care of St. Joseph. St. Bernard of Clairvaux writes "his very name, which, being interpreted, means 'increase.'" Indeed, the name Yosef in Hebrew means "he will add." *In what areas of your life are you desiring an increase and are hopeful a consecration to St. Joseph will provide?*

If we are to discuss increases, we must also discuss sacrifice. Yes, St. Joseph provided a secure foundation for the Holy family--one in which both Jesus and Mary could increase in the Lord's blessings, but Joseph also made many sacrifices to create such a firm foundation. *Therefore, in what areas of your life are you willing to make sacrifices to be more like our spiritual father, St. Joseph?*

On December 8, 2020, Pope Francis declared this the year of St. Joseph and released his Apostolic Letter *PatrisCorde* (which means With a Father's Heart). Pope Francis writes, "My desire to [share personal reflections on St. Joseph] increased during these months of pandemic, when we experienced, amid the crisis, how our lives are woven together and sustained by ordinary people, people often overlooked. People who do not appear in newspaper and magazine headlines, or on the latest television show, yet in these very days are surely shaping the decisive events of our history...Saint Joseph reminds us that those who appear hidden or in the shadows can play an incomparable role in the history of salvation."

You and me, we are everyday people--the ones hidden or in the shadows. Yet, we can aid in the salvation of souls. *Begin today by praying the Prayer to St. Joseph for the Salvation of a Soul on page 246 for a loved one or someone you know that has passed during the pandemic.*

## **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 2 and Wonder 1**

In today's reading we learn about Maximilian Kolbe and his devotion to our Blessed Mother. Over the centuries, there have been many Marian apparitions. When looking up the definition of an apparition it will say something along the lines of "divine, supernatural vision of Mary or Jesus." However, people can have apparitions of St. Joseph too! Perhaps we should come up with a new term for St. Joseph apparitions--"pop"parition. You think I could get Pope Francis to approve? ;)

There was only one brief sentence toward the end of page 13 in which Fr. Calloway mentioned that our culture is confused about gender. Yes! Somehow our culture has taken sexuality and tried to morph it into a gender issue. God created two genders. We have a spiritual mother and father. They are not identified by their sexuality but by their gender--and it is a clear definition. *Let us pray to St. Joseph to clear the confusion.*

Reflect on how our lives are transformed and have been transformed by Marian consecration and/or devotion. *How can we transform our lives and the lives of others when we devote ourselves to St. Joseph?*

On page 14, we have a quote from St. Peter Julian Eymard which leads me to ask you, *how is your vocation like St. Joseph's? Lean on St. Joseph when you face difficulties within your vocation.*

## **Wonder 1 (pg. 83-96)**

Thanks to the world of technology, we can visit the St. Joseph Oratory in Montréal, Canada right from the comfort of home! I have two different videos for you today:

[This video](#) has more about St. André Bessette's life.

[This video](#) has more of a walkthrough of the Oratory.

St. Joseph is the greatest of all saints! In this wonder, Father Calloway discusses how Mother Mary is in her own unique category of holy and reverence because of her unique role in the creation of the second person of the Trinity. Furthermore, Pope Leo XIII stated that the dignity of St. Joseph is higher than that of the angels because of St. Joseph's conjugal bond to Mary.

We might not have the best earthly father figures to look up to which can make it challenging for us to imagine the intense love of God the Father. This is what makes St. Joseph so wonderful—he was man, he was approachable, and he was just. St. Joseph was the perfect example of what God intended for our earthly fathers.

Finally, Fr. Calloway discusses when St. Joseph was added to the Roman Canon and other Eucharistic Prayers. Fr. Joe prays Eucharistic Prayer 1 (Roman Canon) during Mass in which we hear him say "In communion with those whose memory we venerate...and blessed Joseph, her Spouse." To learn more about Eucharistic Prayers, click [here](#).

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 3**

Today we focus on how St. Joseph draws us closer to God the Father. Every prayer, every act of service and charity, is to draw us closer to God. This is the key to our existence and as such, it should be no surprise that the very first paragraph of the Catechism of the Catholic Church expresses this: *God, infinitely perfect and blessed in himself, in a plan of sheer goodness freely created man to make him share in his own blessed life. For this reason, at every time and in every place, God draws close to man (CCC 1).*

St. Joseph's presence in Jesus' life is to be an example of our heavenly Father's love here on earth. Unfortunately, St. Joseph's fatherly roles are hidden and often lost in scripture—keeping him a mystery much like God the Father. Thankfully, every word in the Bible has meaning and despite the lack of writing on St. Joseph, we can learn much about the divine and filial love of God the Father.

Because it is so vital for our relationship with God to understand the relationship between St. Joseph and Jesus and therefore St. Joseph and ourselves, over the next few days I will be breaking down sections of Pope Francis Apostolic Letter *PatrisCorde*:

In Matthew 1:19, we are told that St. Joseph was "just"—a title used for a [select few](#) in the Bible and putting St. Joseph among the ranks of Moses, Noah, and even God and Jesus. St. John Chrysostom stated that St. Joseph was "at the service of the entire plan of salvation." He did this by devoting his life to the sacrificial service of God's Will in raising the Messiah. Because of this sacrifice, St. Joseph is more than our spiritual father but our beloved father.

*Read this KJV [definition of "just"](#) and spend time reflecting on it's meaning. Pray to St. Joseph for his fatherly guidance on forming yourself to be more "just" with every action done as a sacrifice to God. Pray especially the Prayer to St. Francis de Sales on page 242.*

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 4**

Today's reading discusses the importance of devotion to St. Joseph and Our Blessed Mother as ways to get to Jesus. By knowing his mother and father, we can better know Jesus. It is no question that marriage and family are under attack in today's culture. Forty percent of children in the United States are growing up without their fathers! As parents, grandparents, or just examples of the faith for others, we should strive to be more like St. Joseph and show self-sacrificing love.

In Pope Francis' *PatrisCorde*(PC), the Holy Father discusses how St. Joseph is our tender and loving spiritual father. Imagine St. Joseph in the tender moments of Jesus' life—holding Jesus' hand while he took his first steps, giving Jesus a hug when he got home, placing Jesus on his lap to tell him a story, comforting Jesus when he got injured. St. Joseph was the example of God's love. The devil works in the hidden moments of our life and the same would have been true for the Holy Family. Pope Francis quotes Rev 12:10 "Only tender love will save us from the snares of the accuser." The devil speaks truth to condemn us. However, we know that "God's truth does not condemn, but instead welcomes, embraces, sustains and forgives us (PC 2)." Undoubtedly, St. Joseph faced the devil countless times and St. Joseph held many fears and anxieties. Despite this, "Joseph teaches us that faith in God includes believes that he can work even through our fears, our frailties and our weaknesses. He also teaches us that amid the tempests of life, we must never be afraid to let the Lord steer our course (PC 2)."

Fr. Calloway has you read the Privileges of Devotion to St. Joseph on page 226. Here are the seven privileges from Venerable Mary of Agreda:

1. For attaining the virtue of purity and overcoming the sensual inclinations of the flesh

2. For procuring powerful help to escape sin and return to the friendship of God
3. For increasing the love and devotion to most holy Mary
4. For securing the grace of a happy death and protection against the demons in that hour
5. For filling the demons with terror at the mere mention of his name by his clients
6. For gaining health of body and assistance in all kinds of difficulties
7. For securing issue of children in families.
- 8.

*Today, spend time reflecting on the moments in your life that you were overcome with fear and anxiety. Did you turn to prayer first? St. Joseph always turned to prayer. Spend time in prayer today asking the Holy Spirit for his guidance in an issue that is troubling your heart. If helpful, you can use this prayer:*

Oh Holy Spirit, You are the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity. You are the Spirit of truth, love and holiness, proceeding from the Father and the Son, and equal to Them in all things. I adore You and love You with all my heart. Teach me to know and to seek God, by whom and for whom I was created. Fill my heart with a holy fear and a great love for Him. Give me compunction and patience, and do not let me fall into sin.

Increase faith, hope and charity in me and bring forth in me all the virtues proper to my state of life. Help me to grow in the four cardinal virtues, Your seven gifts and Your twelve fruits.

Make me a faithful follower of Jesus, an obedient child of the Church and a help to my neighbor. Give me the grace to keep the commandments and to receive the sacraments worthily. Raise me to holiness in the state of life to which You have called me, and lead me through a happy death to everlasting life. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Grant me also, O Holy Spirit, Giver of all good gifts, the special favor for which I ask {name special petition}, if it be for Your honor and glory and for my well being. Amen.

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 5 and Wonder 2**

In today's reading, Fr. Calloway discusses the connection between St. Joseph and the Holy Spirit. Catechism 741 states: *"The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes with sighs too deep for words." The Holy Spirit, the artisan of God's works, is the master of prayer.* Additionally, the Catechism teaches us that "the Word of God, liturgy of the Church, and the virtues of faith, hope, and charity are sources of prayer (CCC 2662)." All saints became masters of the 7 virtues: faith, hope, charity, prudence, temperance, justice, and fortitude. However, if St. Joseph was to teach Jesus how to pray so eloquently, then St. Joseph must have mastered these virtues early in life with the strength of the Holy Spirit. Today's readings included a brief discussion on the gifts of the Holy Spirit which we will discuss later.

### **Wonder 2**

Wonder 2 discusses St. Joseph being the Patron of the Universal Church, St. Joseph being our spiritual father, and what it means to "go to St. Joseph." Between both sections of reading there was much talk about being St. Joseph being virtuous. If we are to imitate St. Joseph with this consecration, then we should learn more about the 7 virtues so we, too, can become more virtuous. Reaching our full potential cannot happen without prayer. Please watch this [brief video](#) about the virtues and a short summary of each virtue.

If you are looking for more on each of the virtues, including scripture references, please see the attachment of this email. These summaries come from <https://www.thescottsmithblog.com/2019/12/the-catholic-parents-complete-guide-to.html>

Today's reflection question: virtue is the practice or habit of doing what is right to become more like God. We all have areas in our life which make it hard for us to resist evil temptations. *What situations or practices do you have in your life that place you in the place of temptation? How can you free yourself from that area so it is easier for you to choose good and become more virtuous?*

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 6**

One area that children in faith formation struggle with is the teaching of the Holy Trinity as one but three persons. To help the children better understand, we use real-life examples such as a three-legged stool, a clover, an apple, etc. For an apple, we have the seeds, skin, and flesh of the apple—all are individual parts, but all are one apple. The important take-away from today's reading is that the Holy Family could be viewed as one of these examples to explain the Holy Trinity. Of course, none of these comparisons are going to be 100% correct nor are they the best way to teach the mystery of the Trinity. There is nothing on this earth that could accurately explain the mystery of the Holy Trinity. We can, however, view the Holy Family as its own trinity simply because each person has their own role and as a whole they establish the first domestic church.

As we celebrate Our Lord's resurrection today, let us reflect on Christ's obedience. It could be argued that because Christ is divine there is no question that he would be obedient to God the Father's Will. But Jesus is also fully man and because of this, obedience was a challenge. Thus, we can conclude that Jesus learned to be obedient from his earthly father, St. Joseph. We cannot deny that St. Joseph was incredibly obedient. St. Joseph was visited by dreams and immediately acted on the messages he received—whether it was to take Mary as his wife despite her pregnancy or to flee to Egypt. We are given four distinct moments of St. Joseph's obedience: [Mt 1:20-21](#), [Mt 2:13-15](#), [Mt 2:19-21](#), and [Mt 2:22-23](#). Pope Francis states in *PatrisCorde*, "in every situation, Joseph declared his own 'fiat,' like those of Mary at the Annunciation and Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. In his role as head of a family, Joseph taught Jesus to be obedient to his parents (cf. Lk 2:51), in accordance with God's command (cf. Ex 20:12). 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, becoming 'obedient unto death, even death on a cross' (Phil 2:8)."

*Do you struggle with obedience to God's Will? True obedience requires sacrifice. What is a small sacrifice you can make each day that will bring you closer to God?*

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 7**

Today, we discuss the importance of honoring, loving, and accepting Mary. Our goal is to get to heaven and to do so we must imitate Jesus to the best of our ability. We can begin by loving Mary and St. Joseph just as Jesus did. Because we know so little from Scripture on St. Joseph, we, again, must look at Jesus to better understand the man that St. Joseph was. Jesus stepped beyond the culture norms when it came to his interaction with women. He honored them, spoke to them, taught them, ate with them, forgave their sins—Jesus accepted women.

We can conclude that Jesus learned this acceptance from St. Joseph. Yes, God the Father loves all His children—man and woman. But for Jesus to travel and preach to men and women alike, he had to be a master of acceptance beyond his divinity because human temptation to exclude women would be constant battle in those times. Pope Francis says in *PatrisCorde*, "Joseph accepted Mary unconditionally. 'The nobility of Joseph's heart is such that he learned from the law he made dependent on charity. Today, in our world where psychological, verbal, and physical violence towards women is so evident, Joseph appears as the figure of a respectful and sensitive man. Even though he does not understand the bigger picture, he makes a decision to protect Mary's good name, her dignity and her life. In his hesitation about how best to act, God helped him by enlightening his judgment.'"

If we are to honor Mary, we must go a step further and honor all people. Sometimes this requires us to focus on one group of people a little more than another group. Jesus showed us the importance of focusing on not only women, but on sinners, and gentiles. He did not spend nearly as much time on Jews. There is a constant ebb and flow of social justice needs. "Unless we are reconciled with our own history, we will be unable to take a single step forward, for we will always remain hostage to our expectations and the disappointments that follow...The faith Christ taught us is what we see in St. Joseph. He did not look for shortcuts, but confronted reality with open eyes and accepted personal responsibility for it," Pope Francis states in *PatrisCorde*.

We are each called differently to protect our neighbor. St. Joseph teaches us how to be accepting because he accepted Mary and Jesus so lovingly. *Today, pray at least one decade of the rosary for Mary's intercession to provide you the strength and courage to be accepting of a neighbor that has trespassed you recently or in the past. If you are willing and able, do an act of service or charity for that neighbor.*

### Consecration to St. Joseph Day 8

There is a very thin line that Fr. Calloway is walking on in today's reading. Simply because it can come off as if he is saying that St. Joseph is the new Adam rather than Jesus. This is not the case--Jesus is the new Adam. In fact, the Catechism of the Catholic Church also teaches this in [410-411](#). Therefore, the main take-away from this section must be that St. Joseph was the head of the Holy Family or the "head of the Head" which was stated in the text. This does not mean that St. Joseph was in charge of Jesus or our salvation but simply the protector of Mary and Jesus which was to ensure God's plan of salvation would be fulfilled.

### Wonder 3

"Old men don't walk to Egypt." We don't know specifics about the Holy Family's journey to Egypt. According to the Coptic Church (Alexandrian rite--Eastern Rite), the Holy Family made several stops in Egypt. This video includes the Eastern belief/teachings and images of many churches and monasteries that have been established in Egypt as places the Holy Family stayed. It was quite interesting! Skip ahead to 3:30 minute mark to get to the journey <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aqmc8WbCQtc>

It is no question that religious art can skew our imagination on what the Holy Family looked like. In my office I have a picture of Jesus laughing to remind me of the humanity of Jesus. We often see the Holy Family as white...I have even seen the Virgin Mary and Jesus depicted with porcelain skin and red hair! The Holy Family must have had darker skin complexions and dark hair because that was typical for people in the Middle East. Pages 312-320 include commissioned art of St. Joseph. While all of this art shows a younger Joseph, none show a dark skinned Joseph. We cannot dismiss the possibility that St. Joseph had darker skin. This further shows how our teaching and understanding of St. Joseph can be so heavily influenced by art--just as Fr. Calloway was stating in Wonder 3.

Some key quotes to take away from this Wonder: "Art thus unconsciously made Joseph a spouse chaste and pure by age rather than by virtue (Venerable Fulton Sheen)." "St. Joseph is the model for total consecration to Mary (Fr. Calloway)." I will be discussing these further in tonight's live Facebook discussion which will also be available for viewing on the parish website.

Today, let us spend time reflecting on the 4th Commandment "honor your father and your mother." Although the commandment is short and direct, there are many layers and the honoring goes in both directions. *How can we honor our parents and how can our parents honor us? It requires a listening ear and an open heart. What is something you can do today to build the relationships with your family?* For each of us, the answer is different--for some it means more time together and for others it means more time away.

### Consecration to St. Joseph Day 9

Today we are reminded that St. Joseph was a descendant of King David. This was important so that the prophecy would be fulfilled that the King of Kings (Jesus) would be a descendant of David. Therefore, St. Joseph has "kingly blood." Additionally, we can call him lord out of respect for him as a king of the Holy Family. However, unlike most kings, St. Joseph was a servant of others--especially Jesus and Mary.

Jesus taught us that no one is above serving others. The disciples called Jesus "Lord," yet, Jesus bent down and washed the disciples' feet in the Upper Room. Jesus learned this servant heart from St. Joseph. Moreover, Jesus showed creative faith and showed compassion for those that expressed creative faith and courage. Pope Francis discusses this idea in section 5 of *PatrisCorde*. Jesus saw the creative courage of the "friends of the paralytic, who lowered him from the roof in order to bring him to Jesus (cf. Lk 5:17-26)...They were convinced that Jesus could heal the man, and "finding no way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the middle of the crowd in front of Jesus." (PC 5)"

Despite our lack of writing on St. Joseph, we can conclude that he harnessed this creative courage during his lifetime. He did, after all, protect Jesus and Mary which was no easy feat. St. Joseph acted quickly on the messages received in his dreams and was able to provide for his wife and child no matter what obstacles he faced. "God always finds a way to save us, provided we show the same creative courage as the carpenter of Nazareth, who was able to turn a problem into a possibility by trusting always in the divine providence (PC 5)." When we think of kings we do not immediately jump to servanthood...unless of course, we are thinking of Jesus. And now, we should also be thinking of St. Joseph--king of the

Holy Family—when we think of servanthood. “From St. Joseph, we must learn [special love for the least of our brothers and sisters]. We must learn to love the child and his mother, to love the sacraments and charity, to love the Church and the poor (PC 5).”

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 10**

“What all patriarchs [fathers] of the Old Testament foreshadowed, and all Christian fathers are called to reflect, is the paternal light of God shining through the fatherhood of St. Joseph.” As I mentioned in the live chat a couple days ago, St. Joseph was an earthly mirror of our heavenly Father. God continually graces us with his love that gives us light in the darkest moments of our life. St. Joseph’s fatherhood to Jesus (and us) also provided such a light. Trusting in St. Joseph’s protection helps us to find God’s light but also protects us from the darkness of the devil.

Today, I want to finish our discussion on Pope Francis’ *PatrisCorde* apostolic letter. Section 6 of his letter discusses St. Joseph as a working father and how we should entrust our working efforts to his protection and guidance. We will discuss St. Joseph the Worker later in our consecration journey. Section 7 is titled “a father in the shadows” and it ties in nicely with today’s reading. Pope Francis begins this section referencing the book *The Shadow of the Father* and how we can define St. Joseph as a shadow. St. Joseph knew that his role was to help Jesus flourish. As a result, St. Joseph was the shadow in the background—protecting Jesus as he grew up and providing Jesus with the tools and life-skills to be successful. St. Joseph is often called a “most chaste” father. What does it mean to be a chaste father (or mother or friend)? Pope Francis writes, “chastity is freedom from possessiveness in every sphere of one’s life. Only when love is chaste, is it truly love. A possessive love ultimately becomes dangerous: it imprisons, constricts and makes for misery (PC 7).”

St. Joseph teaches Jesus and all of us how to love with freedom. By reflecting the light and love of God, he became the “shadow” and he was able to love Jesus and Mary in such a way that they were truly free to live their lives following God’s Will. As spouses, as parents, and as friends, we should all aspire to love our neighbor so freely. *Is there something small that your spouse or child or friend does that bothers you or hinders you from loving them even more? Pray on it. Give it to St. Joseph and ask for him to help you love even the most bothersome aspects of that person.*

If you are interested in reading *PatrisCorde*, you can [find it here](#). Trust me, it is a much easier read than a majority of apostolic letters!

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 11 and Wonder 4**

I appreciated how Fr. Calloway grouped all vocations that men could possibly have under the umbrella of protectors. All men across all time have been created by God to be protectors of something no matter how small. Adam was created and ask to tend to the earth. Once woman was created, Adam was tasked with taking care of Eve and protecting all future offspring. Every man in the Bible was charged with taking care and protecting someone or something. Today, the world desperately needs men that are protectors. This requires a certain level of strength, courage, and wisdom that many cultures—especially here in the USA—is being shunned. There is a constant struggle for all people to be “equal” in all their talents. This makes it so that women become the protectors and men take on other roles that are often for women. Men and women were created out of equal love of God but each were made with their own talents and abilities. Men are the protectors. *Let us pray to St. Joseph for the men of the world to return to this important vocation!*

### **Wonder 4**

This Wonder begins with the discussion of the Feast of the Holy Spouses. I agree that as a Church, we do not spend enough time teaching the importance and sanctity of marriage. I also feel that the Church does not celebrate and give enough respect to the marital bond between Mary and St. Joseph. I am sure you would agree that we spend more time thinking about each spouse separately than we think about their union bound in God. That is one of the graces of this book! Every day we read about St. Joseph and reflect upon his love of Jesus and Mary and the importance of his marriage to Our Blessed Mother.

The section about the Virginal Father of Jesus was quite lengthy and in depth. Therefore, I will not spend much focus on it. Please reach out to me if you have any questions on anything that you read. As you are reading sections like this, keep in mind that the Church is a living entity and over time, teachings change or become more accepted as more attention

and study is done. I also use the word “change” differently than how we typically use it. The Church remains unchanged. It is our understanding of her teachings that change because we learn more and our minds and hearts become more accepting of her teachings.

The final section of this Wonder is about Santo Anello—Mary’s wedding band. I tried my best to find a video of Mary’s wedding band in English but didn’t have any luck. [This video](#) is a close up of the wedding band. [This video](#) shows the ceremony of the wedding band coming down. The title contains the word “calata” which means “drop” in Italian. I wish I had more information to share, unfortunately, I was coming up short. If you find more information about the ceremonial drop, please email me so I can include your findings in the next Facebook chat.

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 12**

Chastity is often called the forgotten virtue and rightfully so. Humans are no strangers of giving into their desires (look at Adam and Eve). Additionally, God laid out many rules/laws for the Israelites when it came to sexual affairs/matters. But chastity goes much further than just avoiding sexual acts. Chastity is about respecting oneself and growing by practicing self-discipline. There are small ways we can practice this virtue and we do this practice every year for lent. We can continue the practice beyond those 40 days by doing a small practice of self-discipline every day. For example, if you love to put salt on everything or order extra cheese on your pizza, lessen or completely stop this action for a day. We know that salt and cheese aren’t good for our bodies but we choose these things anyway. Say no as a way to respect yourself and in doing so you are giving further respect to God. *What are some other small ways you can practice self-discipline?*

Today, I will begin breaking down another apostolic letter about St. Joseph. The title of this letter is *QuamquamPluries* and was written by Pope Leo XIII in 1889. As you can imagine (because of the date it was written), this letter is more of a challenge to read but an important letter nonetheless. This text was written in a decade with abundant changes. There were many wars throughout the world and this was also the time period of the Second Industrial Revolution. Thomas Edison started the Edison Illuminating Company, and there were countless inventions and advancements: batteries, cargo airplanes, submarines, cars, movies, and the drinking straw! The United States went through 5 presidents in one decade—one of them assassinated (James Garfield). Beyond the mechanical and electrical advancements, the science of psychology was picking up and the study of human emotion and thought processes began to be explored. As a result, Pope Leo XIII begins the letter by expressing the danger in so much change and the importance of prayer to Mother Mary. He states, “We see faith, the root of all the Christian virtues, lessening in many souls; we see charity growing cold; the young generation daily growing in depravity of moral and views; the Church of Jesus Christ attacked on every side by open force or by craft; a relentless war waged against the Sovereign Pontiff; and the very foundations of religion undermined with a boldness which waxes daily in intensity.”

I encourage you to reflect on the amount of changes in the 1880s and compare that to the amount of change we have experienced in the past decade. Facebook introduced the “like” button in 2009 and it was in 2011 that Facebook introduced the timeline that we scroll through today. In 2010, the first iPad was released, Instagram was created, smart phones were becoming more popular thanks to Steve Jobs, and 4G was released. Technology and science can certainly help us, but they can also create a lot of false idol worship. *It’s a beautiful day out there! Step away from the technology and news, get out in nature and reflect on the beauty God has surrounded you with.*

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 13**

The title of “foster-father” is a personal one for me. As a stepmother my role is to provide care and love to my stepson. The important take-away for today’s reading is that St. Joseph was more than just a legal father for Jesus on earth. St. Joseph’s role was the same as any biological father’s role. Because divorce and child-born out of wedlock is so common, more and more children are raised by stepparents. But not all stepparents are up for the role they are tasked with. We should all feel so blessed to have God the Father which gives us life eternally and St. Joseph to protect and guide us. If we also have great fathers or stepfathers in our life, we are extremely blessed.

In today’s reading, Fr. Calloway discusses how the spiritual motherhood of Mary does not cease in heaven, therefore, our spiritual father does not stop his duty in heaven either. Pope Leo XIII mentions Mary’s spiritual motherhood in section 2 of *QuamquamPluries*. In times of trouble, we often ask for the intercession of Mary and because of God’s great love for Mary, we have faith that our prayers will be readily heard through her intercession. Pope Leo XIII encourages us

to devote ourselves to St. Joseph as well. St. Joseph was greatly loved by both Mary and God. Therefore, we should have faith that the intercession of St. Joseph will help all Catholics in our daily hurdles.

*Think about a time when you got hurt as a child. Your parents comforted you when you were hurt. Mary and St. Joseph want to help you during the moments of spiritual hurt. What is weighing on your heart today? Give it to your spiritual mother and father. On page 241, you will find the Pope Leo XIII prayer from *QuamquamPluries*. With your special intention in mind, say this prayer after you pray a decade or a full rosary.*

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 14 and Wonder 5**

Zealous is such a wonderful word for the devotion to your protection and the protection of Mary and Jesus that St. Joseph has. We can often lose our excitement and our energy to live out our faith, to pray, to love others, etc. But Jesus never loses his zeal for you, therefore, we should work hard to never lose our zeal for him! When I was reflecting on St. Joseph with today's readings, I was deeply moved by St. Joseph's great love. We are so unworthy of God's love and the love of the saints. Yet here we are, being showered with love and prayers endlessly. St. Joseph was simply tasked with protecting Mary and Jesus but he graciously took on the role of protecting us as well. Thanks be to God for this protection!

### **Wonder 5**

This Wonder was quite lengthy so I will try to keep my notes short! Son of David, as Fr. Calloway mentioned, is a Messianic title but it is important for us to pay attention to when "son" is capitalized. When referring to St. Joseph, the "s" is lower case. Fr. Calloway mentions that Jesus is referred as the Son of David 17 times in the New Testament. A majority of those times, "son" is capitalized. The passages when "son" is lower case occur when Jesus is speaking of himself or crowds are unsure if Jesus can hold such a title. However, when a follower of Jesus declares with confidence that Jesus is "Son of David" it is capitalized--giving the title more reverence.

The section titled *Just and Reverent Man* is a great example of how scripture translation can completely change the meaning of the text and our understanding of people in the Bible. This is also a great example of theological reflection. Fr. Calloway is not saying what we have interpreted for centuries is wrong, he is simply pointing out that there could be a different perspective to the idea of St. Joseph wanting to "divorce" Mary. These types of reflections are what have produced all Church teachings. A single person can oppose the meaning of a teaching and it can lead to an entire Council meeting, discussing, and praying for discernment. It is how all the foundational teachings of the Church came about. These differences in understanding of teachings is also what has led to the creation of other denominations.

The final section of this Wonder discusses the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. How often do you pray to the Holy Spirit? We receive the Holy Spirit at baptism and then are sealed with the Spirit at Confirmation. The Spirit *dwells* in you. But the poor Holy Spirit is often the forgotten person in the Trinity. *Today, direct your prayers to the Holy Spirit. To really enrich your spiritual journey, make praying to the Spirit a regular occurrence. It can be as simple as saying "Come Holy Spirit" when you need help.*

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 15**

One can't argue that the title "head of household" began to shift when women entered the workforce. There was a need for women in the workforce during the various wars between 1930-1970. However, married women were not the majority of women in the workforce right away. In 1890, 8% of working women were married, which rose to 26% in 1930, and 47% in 1950. Female teens in the 1970s began to shift their priorities from becoming wife and mother to becoming a career woman. As a result of this change, the dynamic of the female role shifted and the understanding of "head of household" became synonymous with bread-winner. However, as Fr. Calloway discusses in today's reading, the head of household is the protector of the family--the one to safeguard against evil. This role was given to man by God Himself.

Pope Leo XIII discusses St. Joseph's role as head of the Holy Family in section 3 of *QuamquamPluries*. Pope Leo XIII begins by confirming what we have already read and discussed in our study--that because St. Joseph was bound "to the Blessed Virgin by the ties of marriage...he approached nearer than any to the eminent dignity [to her than] all creatures (QP 3)." Because St. Joseph was a witness to Mary's "maidenhood, the protector of her honor, but also, by virtue of the



conjugal tie, a participator in her sublime dignity...[and] guardian of the Son of God," St. Joseph held the obligation to be the head of the family (QP 3).

Furthermore, because Jesus is the Head of the Church, and Mary is the Mother of God, she is the Mother of the Church, St. Joseph is the protector of the Church. His family now rests in heaven, thus, he is tasked with the role of protecting the family that spreads over the earth and he now covers it with the "cloak of his heavenly patronage and defends[s] the Church of Jesus Christ." *Today, please spend some time reflecting on the Scripture passage from today's reading, [Eph 5:22-33](#). I highly encourage doing a Lectio Divina prayer on this passage. Steps to Lectio Divina: invite the Holy Spirit to come guide you, read the scripture, listen to what God is saying to you in the passage (write down what comes to you), pray on what God has said, contemplate how to act on God's message.*

To read more about the advancement of women in the workforce click this link: <https://equitablegrowth.org/womens-history-month-u-s-womens-labor-force-participation/>

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 16**

Today, we discuss St. Joseph as being a "just man" as it is stated in Scripture. I think it is wise for us to understand the virtue of justice if we are to question if we are just men and women. [This video](#) is 3 minutes and tells us what the Catechism says about justice and what it means to give God and neighbor what is due to them. We can often put ourselves front and center, which is why we should contemplate on the actions of St. Joseph and how he formed himself as a just man by doing what was right for God and all neighbors (especially Jesus and Mary).

As I mentioned a couple days ago, much was going on in the world when Pope Leo XIII wrote *QuamquamPluries*. The focus of this apostolic letter was to teach about St. Joseph as a protector and guide for people as they struggled to keep faith in God's work amid all the changes that occurred throughout the decade. He will conclude the letter with action, but today, we are looking at section 4 in which Pope Leo XIII discusses St. Joseph the provider.

If you were to go back to Genesis you would read the story about the first Joseph, the descendant of Jacob, and how he went from being casted out of his family by his brothers to right-hand man to the Pharaoh of Egypt. This Joseph "won favor and goodwill of his master...presided over the kingdom with great power...[and when drought fell upon the land] he provided all the needs of the Egyptians with so much wisdom that the King decreed to him the title 'Saviour of the world' (QP 4)." St. Joseph, our spiritual father, held much of these same qualities. However, St. Joseph showed us that the lowliest of us workers can possess duties that when joined with virtue, can be extremely noble. It wasn't kingly work that St. Joseph did like Joseph of Egypt. St. Joseph was a lowly carpenter, husband, and father. He approached all of these duties practicing the virtues and as a result became "just" in the eyes of God.

*Today, pray with Micah 6:8*

*He has told you, O mortal, what is good;  
and what does the Lord require of you  
but to do justice, and to love kindness,  
and to walk humbly with your God?*

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 17 and Wonder 6**

Congratulations! You have successfully made it past the half-way mark! St. Joseph Most Chaste is a noble example for all of us. We know the foundation of the Sacrament of Marriage is the conjugal bond between husband and wife. This bond takes love to a deeper level—one in which husband and wife not only procreate but raise the next generation of Christians to carry on the Church. Mary and St. Joseph exemplify how not only is it possible for spouses to remain chaste, but it is a requirement for their love to flourish. Over the past year, I have seen more pictures/artwork of the hearts of the Holy Family. I want to share with you [this artist](#) that sells her Holy Family hearts as a vinyl sticker. Stickers are great for water bottles, journals, or to use as a bookmark.

### **Wonder 6**

For our prayer today, I encourage you to pray the Seven Sorrows and Seven Joys of St. Joseph. If this type of prayer is new to you, [watch this video](#) to guide you. It is just under 16 minutes in length. Pray for your own intention of full consecration to St. Joseph.

Before we began this journey together, I read portions of the book to prepare and the very first question I wrote down was “How did St. Joseph prepare Mary for her upcoming sorrows?” My follow up question, “In what ways do you think St. Joseph helped Mary spiritually prepare to witness Jesus suffer on the cross?” These are questions I still ponder and questions that Fr. Calloway attempts to answer in the Savior of the Savior section of this Wonder. We do not have the answers to these questions because most of the life of the Holy Family has been hidden from us. So, we must turn to our own lives and reflect on how our spouses, friends, and family have spiritually prepared us for our hardest spiritual battles. For some of us, we have been prepared for battle by being provided someone with an exceptional listening ear. Some of you may have prayer pillars in your lives that have such a profound prayer life that it has touched our own prayer life in a special way. And for all of us, we have had someone (even if for a small portion of our lives) that was willing to stand by our side when times got hard and pick us up every time we stumbled. St. Joseph was all those roles for Mary. We cannot doubt that being mother of the Messiah was challenging and required an extreme amount of discipline, prayer, and faith. But because Mary was human, she would have moments of weakness and it was in those moments that St. Joseph would be there for her in whatever capacity she needed. All of us have earthly saviors, who is/was yours? Thanks be to God for giving you those great souls.

In the final section of Wonder 6, we read a portion of the beautiful homily from St. Josemaría Escrivá. St. Josemaría Escrivá founded Opus Dei which is an organization within the Church that teaches people how to share Christian ideals and values through their occupations. The group does this because all people are called to holiness and even an “ordinary life” is a path to sanctity. This group is highly controversial because it tends to lean more Conservative and as a result receives much scrutiny. You can find out more about this group in the United States [here](#). St. Josemaría Escrivá’s feast day is June 26th and he is the patron saint of Opus Dei and people with diabetes.

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 18**

We begin today’s reading with a section from the Catechism of the Catholic Church about the virtue of prudence. I would like to take this a step further by looking at Natural Law. We are all created to participate in the wisdom and goodness of the Creator. God gives us mastery over our own acts and we have the ability to govern ourselves with a view to the true and the good (adapted from CCC 1954). It is written on our soul how to be good and avoid sin. Our practice of this is the virtue of prudence. Even though we all have the same soul stamp to know good and do good, we aren’t all prudent. We don’t all strive to do what is good for ourselves and God at all times. Thus, we must always turn to prayer for discernment just as St. Joseph did.

The Holy Spirit is certainly at work with our program here. We read about St. Joseph the Most Prudent and on the same day we are discussing section 5 from *Quamquam Pluries*. This is divine intervention because in section 5, Pope Leo XIII addresses the poor and those who work with their hands to avoid the evil they are so often presented with. Pope Leo XIII tells these men and women to be just, but what he is truly telling them is to be prudent. He reminds this group of people that sympathizing with evil simply gives birth to more evil. What the pope is trying to stress here is the importance of a living wage for the working family but that people should not look for living wages by following evil people. Instead, Pope Leo XIII states, the poor should look to the “example and patronage of the Blessed Joseph, and to the maternal charity of the Church.”

When times are hard, falling into sin becomes easier. In the 1880s, the rich were getting richer and fast. And although people were working, a large majority of people struggled to make a living wage. This provides us another example of how important our consecration to St. Joseph is. He was a poor man that was able to remain prudent despite the challenges to provide for Mary and Joseph. *Today, do an act for the poor within our community. It may be donating food or clothing to the St. Vincent de Paul group at St. Priscilla, or it may be giving money to the beggar at the intersection. Whatever the act is, do not forget to pray for the person receiving.*

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 19**

By this time in our study, we have no doubt that St. Joseph was a courageous man. Fr. Calloway focuses on St. Joseph’s courage when traveling to new places with family in tow. Just being Mary’s husband required courage! She was

pregnant before their wedding day. Scrutiny was sure to follow them. And of course, St. Joseph had to be courageous to be the earthly father of Jesus. We do not hear about the childhood of Jesus but if you watched the video a couple weeks ago about the pilgrimage of the Holy Family through Egypt, then you know that the Eastern Church believes that Jesus performed many miracles as a child. This would have brought a lot of attention to the Holy Family and would require St. Joseph to be fearless to defend Jesus without revealing the child was the Messiah.

Today, we are concluding our discussion on *Quamquam Pluries*. It is a short apostolic letter which focuses on the need to go to St. Joseph when times are challenging and abruptly changing. In section 6 of the letter, Pope Leo XIII encourages the faithful to pray the prayer found on page 241 of our consecration books after reciting the rosary in the month of October. In doing so, partial indulgences are granted. Additionally, the faithful are asked to give praise and honor to St. Joseph in the month of March, especially on his feast day of March 19<sup>th</sup>.

What is a partial indulgence? It is like plenary indulgence in that the after-effects of sin or the suffering from sin is forgiven. For a plenary indulgence, all the suffering is removed/forgiven but with a partial only part of the suffering is removed. Indulgences can be a little confusing. Think of it as an “earthly purgatory.” Reconciliation is for the action of sin, indulgence is for the suffering of the sin. For the year of St. Joseph, partial indulgence is offered for reciting the prayer on different days of the year outside of the month of October. One such day is our consecration day, May 1<sup>st</sup>. You can find the other dates for partial indulgences [here](#).

Today’s prayer:

*Dear God, give me courage,  
for perhaps I lack it more than anything else.  
I need courage before men against their threats  
and against their seductions.  
I need courage to bear unkindness,  
mockery, contradiction.  
I need courage to fight against the devil,  
against terrors and troubles, temptations,  
attractions, darkness and false lights,  
against tears, depression, and above all fear.  
I need Your help, dear God.  
Strengthen me with Your love and Your grace.  
Console me with Your blessed Presence  
and grant me the courage to persevere  
until I am with You forever in heaven. Amen.*

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 20 and Wonder 7**

This past fall I took a Moral Theology class at the seminary. It was, by far, the most interesting class I took for my certificate program. It was interesting because each week we would break down a commandment so far that you would scratch your head wondering what did God actually want you to do? “Thou shall not kill” means we shouldn’t kill but it also means that we should do what we can to preserve life. For example, the death penalty is wrong. But in an area where there aren’t jails or police to monitor streets, then the death penalty is accepted if it means keeping a mass murderer off the streets. Obedience is tricky to discuss because every situation is unique and each person will be called to obedience differently. We certainly see a lot of that today. It can be easy for us to say there are two sides: those that follow government order about coronavirus and those that don’t. Saying there are only two sides is doing all of us a disservice. There are many facets to the world we are currently living in. This pandemic affects everyone differently and as a result, their obedience is unique to them. We must all strive to be obedient to God first—of course, we must remind ourselves that each of us hear God differently.

### **Wonder 7**

As with a few parts of this text, it is important for us to remember that portions of this book is Fr. Calloway’s reflection on saint quotes, apparitions, and Scripture. He states in the Adorer of Christ section that it does not state in Scripture if

St. Joseph went with Mary to visit Elizabeth and stay with her. Scripture also doesn't say that he didn't accompany her. I personally feel that it is possible for St. Joseph to accompany Mary on her journey to visit Elizabeth to keep her safe. I do not believe he stayed with her or that he heard Elizabeth's greeting. It is fun to think about all these different possibilities though! I hope this text has encouraged you to look beyond Scripture for what is *not* there.

The story of Holy House of Loreto is a fascinating one! During my search for a video of the house for you, I found [this video](#) which shows many parts of the basilica. In the video, it states that it was believed that the house was transported by angels but later discovered it was transported by boat. Okay, sure, transported by boat, but how did they lift and put down 3 sides of a house without major damage several times in the 1200s? That is a feat by today's standards! I think we could all agree that some things cannot be explained by study and science and we must accept God's mysterious works! If you are interested, this is a [longer video](#) on the house (50 minutes) but a small disclaimer—I haven't watched this one yet.

*Today's prayer is to spend a few minutes with the Lord virtually! Did you know that you can go to Adoration anytime thanks to technology? [Go to Adoration here](#) and give thanks and praise to God.*

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 21**

Today, as we read about St. Joseph's faithfulness to God, Mary, and Jesus, we should also read and reflect on the Catechism of the Catholic Church's teaching on the virtue of faith. As Fr. Calloway mentioned in today's reading, faith is a theological virtue--which as the Catechism teaches, are the virtues that are the foundation of Christian moral activity. It is the virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity that deal directly with our relationship with God and ultimately with others.

"Faith is the theological virtue by which we believe in God and believe all that he has said and revealed to us (CCC 1814)." Because we believe all that God has revealed to us, we want to know more and do God's Will. Faith works closely with hope and love (charity), for if we do not live our faith with the other two theological virtues, then our faith is "dead" and we are not "a living member of his Body [the Church] (CCC 1815-1816)."

Fr. Calloway pointed out direct struggles to living a faithful life--loss of relationships, ridicule, and maybe even financial loss. But as we all know, living a life of faith can often present itself with more struggles and challenges than we knew existed. Sometimes it even creates struggles within ourselves. We battle within our own heads on what to believe and what to profess. Therefore, we must continually turn to Jesus for guidance. And we now can also turn toward St. Joseph.

*Today's prayer:*

*Lord, I believe:*

*I wish to believe in Thee.*

*Lord, let my faith be full and unreserved,  
and let it penetrate my thought,  
my way of judging Divine things and human things.*

*Lord, let my faith be joyful  
and give peace and gladness to my spirit,  
and dispose it for prayer with God  
and conversation with men,  
so that the inner bliss of its fortunate possession  
may shine forth in sacred and secular conversation.*

*Lord, let my faith be humble and not presume  
to be based on the experience of my thought and of my feeling;  
but let it surrender to the testimony of the Holy Spirit,  
and not have any better guarantee than in docility to  
Tradition and to the authority of the magisterium of the Holy Church.  
Amen.*

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 22**

This morning I was waiting to turn left onto 12 Mile after dropping my kids off at school. There was quite a bit of traffic so I had to wait about 2 minutes before I could turn. Another mom decided she didn't have the time to wait in the left turn lane so she decided to turn left from the right lane AND she turned into traffic causing the oncoming traffic to hit their brakes. She sped off and zipped right to her next destination...which was the Starbucks drive thru line. I had to shake my head at this woman's lack of patience but in reality, I, too, have had these extreme moments when patience was nowhere to be found (but never for a coffee).

Fr. Calloway reminded us today that just because St. Joseph was an exemplary example of patience does not mean he was without anxiety. For St. Joseph, the anxiety stemmed from keeping Jesus a secret, providing for his family when money and resources were tight, and protecting Mary and Jesus from the dangers that constantly surrounded them. For us, we can have similar anxieties. We also can have a lot of anxiety about our journey with God. A faithful life requires constant self-reflection, constant personal work, admitting our faults, reconciling our sins...it is stressful and can cause a great deal of anxiety. It is easy for us to want to avoid the work and ask God to just give us patience, or give us a loving heart, etc. He is God, He can do whatever He wants! We know He wants us to be saints--to hold all these virtues. Why can't He just make it happen?

God wants us to work toward those virtues. He can no longer just open heaven's gate for everyone. We all have to earn our space there. And even though the work here is hard and can run our patience really thin, He is teaching us in those moments. So today, as we reflect on the moments when our patience isn't the greatest, let's also search for the lesson God is teaching us.

Today's prayer:

*Blessed Mary, Mother of Consolation, pray with me for the virtue of patience. There are so many times when my lack of patience keeps me from becoming the kind of person God wants me to be.*

*Guide my thoughts to you and the example we have in your own life. Help me to become patient, as you were patient.*

*Through your guidance, may I become more accepting of others around me. Assist me to welcome difficult times with a patient heart.*

*May I be patient, Mary, as was your beloved husband, Joseph. His quiet acceptance of the will of Our Loving Father should be an example for me always. His patience was most wonderful in the eyes of God.*

*Pray for me, dear Mother of God, that I will allow the Father to come into my heart and help me grow in patience. Amen.*

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 23 & Wonder 8**

The beatitudes ("blessed be" sayings from Jesus) can often be confusing. To our ears it can sound like we need to be poor, hungry, mourning, and poor in spirit to earn a place in heaven. If taken at face value it can seem like a turn off because those are things we certainly don't want! The beatitudes are the markers of true happiness and it is not that we should literally be poor or literally have a poor faith life (poor in spirit) or be begging for food on the corner to be happy. Jesus is teaching us that we must detach ourselves from worldly possessions. Yes, you can have earthly possessions--you can have money, you can have a full stomach, etc. but you must not rely on those things for happiness. St. Joseph teaches us by his example that true happiness comes from devoting ourselves fully to God and His Works. God will always provide for us. That is why Jesus tells us not to worry so much. :)

### **Wonder 8**

I found a 2 minute video on the miraculous staircase in the Chapel of Loretto in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The staircase is beautiful! It is hard to hear stories like this and be a witness to their outcomes and not believe in miracles. [Watch the video](#) and let me know if you believe St. Joseph built this staircase for the Sisters of Loretto.

The writings from St. Mary Ephrem are so detailed and lovely. You can truly picture what St. Joseph looks like. What I enjoy most about reading these apparition stories is hearing what St. Joseph said to these people. St. Joseph's words were never shared in the Bible, he hardly spoke to the Sisters of Loretto when making the miraculous staircase, and yet, he appears to people with Mary and without Mary and speaks! On earth, we picture St. Joseph a quiet man of contemplation and action. Now that he has completed his earthly vocation, he carries a new role in heaven to share his fatherhood, courage, and protection with more than just action but also with his words. This leaves me wondering, if I

am graced with the opportunity to live with God in heaven, what works will He give me that far surpass anything I could have accomplished on earth? What about you?

The final section of Wonder 8 is about Sleeping Joseph. I love the idea of writing prayer intentions and leaving it under a Sleeping Joseph statue so he can pray during his sleep for our intentions. There are countless statue styles and they are available on Amazon if you want one asap! Today's prayer is the Sleeping St. Joseph prayer that Pope Francis prays:

*O Glorious St. Joseph, thou who hast power to render possible even things which are considered impossible, come to our aid in our present trouble and distress. Take this important and difficult affair under thy particular protection, that it may end happily.*

*O dear St. Joseph, all our confidence is in thee. Let it not be said that we would invoke thee in vain; and since thou art so powerful with Jesus and Mary. Show that thy goodness equals thy power.*

*St. Joseph, to whom God entrusted the care of the holiest family that has ever been, grant, we ask of you, the father and protector of ours, and let the grace be brought to us to live and die in the love of Jesus and Mary.*

*St. Joseph, pray for us who have recourse to thee.*

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 24**

While reading St. Joseph Model of Workmen, the story of Jesus calling Simon, Andrew, and John came to mind. Specifically when Simon Peter tells Jesus, "Teacher, we have worked all night and we have caught nothing. But because You told me to, I will let the net down (Luke 5:5)." When Simon Peter follows the instruction of Jesus, they caught so many fish their nets began to rip. As each decade passes, work becomes less a means of providing and more of a declaration of status. At least that how it appears to me. The more you work and more money you make, the more accomplished you *appear*. St. Joseph teaches us that work is for giving to our families, our community, and of course, giving to God. Work is not for our own status-quo.

We must find a balance between work, giving to others, and rest. God commands us to rest and we resist. The temptations of the world to stay busy are strong! Today, let's reflect on our work (professional work and work around the house) and ask ourselves how would Jesus instruct me to do this work? We are often distracted by the work of the earthly world that we miss the work God places before us (like Simon Peter). The heavenly work and earthly work can certainly work hand in hand—Jesus showed us this in the Bible many times over.

Today's prayer was written by Pope St. Pius X: *O Glorious Saint Joseph, model of all those who are devoted to labor, obtain for me the grace to work in a spirit of penance for the expiation of my many sins; to work conscientiously, putting the call of duty above my natural inclinations; to work with thankfulness and joy, considering it an honor to employ and develop by means of labor the gifts received from God; to work with order, peace, moderation and patience, never shrinking from weariness and trials; to work above all with purity of intention and detachment from self, keeping unceasingly before my eyes death and the account that I must give of time lost, talents unused, good omitted, and vain complacency in success, so fatal to the work of God.*

*All for Jesus, all through Mary, all after thy example, O Patriarch, Saint Joseph. Such shall be my watch-word in life and in death. Amen.*

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 25**

I did a quick search on the prayer to St. Joseph to sell a house (with the statue as Fr. Calloway was discussing) and the prayer mortified me! The last part of the prayer reads: *Saint Joseph, I am going to place you in a difficult position with your head in darkness and you will suffer as our Lord suffered, until this house is sold. Then, Saint Joseph, I swear before the cross and God Almighty, that I will redeem you and you will receive my gratitude and a place of honor in my home.* We are putting conditions on our prayers and openly telling saints that we will make them suffer? I feel like this is the total opposite of the type of respect and devotion that we should bestow upon our spiritual father.

Today's reading really encompasses much of what I have been enjoying with this consecration—the opportunity to reflect on the humanity of the Holy Family. The fact that God became man leaves me in awe but to then think about how the same God that created life, heavens, and earth, was also just like you and me, leaves me dumbfounded. Although the Holy Family was not exactly like my own family because they were holy, they shared the same day to day actions and struggles that you and I face. We are truly blessed to be part of the one true God's family. No other religion allows for man to be part of a god's life as Christianity does.

Today's prayer:

*We bless your name, O Lord,  
for sending your own incarnate Son,  
to become part of a family,  
so that, as he lived its life,  
he would experience its worries and its joys.  
We ask you, Lord,  
to protect and watch over this family,  
so that in the strength of your grace  
its members may enjoy prosperity,  
possess the priceless gift of your peace,  
and, as the Church alive in the home,  
bear witness in this world to your glory.  
We ask this thought Christ our Lord.  
Amen.*

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 26 & Wonder 9**

It is no question that society continually strays further and further from purity. As the catechism leader, I work with children of all ages and I am witness to the pressure put on children to stray from purity. Our culture has made it normal for toddlers to witness impure behavior and to accept it as normal. This leaves us—the ones trying to preserve purity in children—a uphill battle to climb. Previously, I did not entrust the pure hearts of the children in the catechism program to the protection of St. Joseph, but I am looking forward to doing so moving forward. I encourage you to entrust St. Joseph to keep your own heart pure and keep the hearts pure of the children you know.

### **Wonder 9**

Unfortunately, St. Priscilla does not have Masses on Wednesday for us to participate in or offer to St. Joseph. There is a shrine to St. Joseph in Detroit that offers the low Latin Mass at 12pm on Wednesdays with the Perpetual Novena to St. Joseph. St. Joseph Shrine is at 1828 Jay St., Detroit, 48207. <https://institute-christ-king.org/detroit>

In the section, Patron of a Happy Death, there is a lot of discussion on if St. Joseph was assumed into heaven as Mary was. The Assumption of Mary is not in the Bible but it is a dogma (teaching) of the Church. St. Joseph being assumed is not a teaching of the Church and is still something that popes and saints spectate. Perhaps one of us will live in the time that the assumption of St. Joseph will be called an official teaching of the Church. That would be wonderful!

Finally, in the Pious Union of St. Joseph, we learn that the US headquarters of the Pious Union of St. Joseph is in Grass Lake, Michigan. Grass Lake is about halfway between Ann Arbor and Jackson. I have their website linked here: <https://www.piousunionofstjoseph.org/> They offer a variety of Masses and it appears that they offer outdoor Masses as well.

Today's prayer is the prayer for those in purgatory: *Eternal Father, I offer Thee the Most Precious Blood of Thy Divine Son, Jesus, in union with the masses said throughout the world today, for all the holy souls in purgatory, for sinners everywhere, for sinners in the universal church, those in my own home and within my family. Amen.*

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 27**

If you watched our very first live chat on Day 1, you know that my husband, Larry, and I really focused on St. Joseph being the pillar of families and what that means for families today. Throughout this study, I know many have expressed your newfound love of St. Joseph and I hope the same is true for all of you. He is truly a wonderful role model for all people—especially fathers. As my husband shared, his father abandoned Larry and his family when he was only 2 years old. Since then, it has been a struggle to establish a trusting relationship. Although my father was always around, he was a workaholic for much of my childhood and it was only until I reached high school that he made more of an effort to step away from his work.

But this is not uncommon in today's culture. Half of today's children are raised in broken families, and almost half of that number do not even have relationships with their fathers. Furthermore, the child support and visitation system can be so heavily flawed that the fathers in broken families are practically forced to be workaholics because of high child support and the need to still provide for their families at home. If anyone can prove the power of God it is my husband. Statistically, Larry should struggle to be a good dad because he did not have a good father example growing up. Because he was raised in a broken household, Larry, statistically, should also struggle to keep a quality job. Furthermore, Larry has a child from a previous relationship and has been forced into the broken family court system where everything has worked against him. But my husband trusts in God and has allowed the Holy Spirit to guide him. As a result, he is not only an amazing provider and husband, but he is an exceptional father. All children gravitate to him because of what a spectacular dad he is. This may just sound like I am bragging about my husband (I kind of am), but I am really trying to stress how it is possible to resist what culture paints as the modern family. My husband is just one example of how living like St. Joseph in today's time is not only possible but necessary.

*Today's prayer: please pray the Pope John XXIII prayer at the bottom of page 241.*

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 28**

It is in the 25th chapter of Matthew where we hear Jesus instructing us on how to care for the afflicted. We know this as the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. Upon reflecting on the works, we can see how St. Joseph could have done all of these for Jesus and thus, taught Jesus how to do these same works for others. Of course, women can do the works as well. But I think we can all agree that a father holds a special role of teacher for children. It is from the father that children learn the tough lessons of life. It is from the mother that children learn to love and care. The corporal and spiritual works are love in action. It is the work of the mother carried out by the work of the father. After spending time reflecting on this, we can see how the absence of fathers can be so detrimental to the success of a society. Without children learning how to love in action from their fathers, it can lead to a lack of self-care and ultimately a lack of care for others.

*For today's prayer, I encourage you to do an action. One of the most challenging works is "instructing the ignorant". We are called to share the Gospel and educate the world on our faith! Today, share your faith and it's Truth with someone you love. It can be as simple as sharing a quote on social media from a saint about the Truths of the Faith.*

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 29 and Wonder 10**

Today's reading on St. Joseph, Hope for the Sick is a great reminder of the powerful intercession of St. Joseph. By this time in our consecration preparation, we should all feel that we can fully entrust/consecrate ourselves to St. Joseph and not even illness can be a hurdle for us.

### **Wonder 10**

Consecration Day for us is on May 1st, the Feast of St. Joseph the Worker. In the first section of Wonder 10, we learn that Pope Pius XII declared the feast day to combat the evils of communism. St. Joseph is working in miraculous ways lately--especially this year. Not only did our beautiful St. Joseph statue arrive in time to be blessed on May 1st, but we (a nation) are beginning to battle the inception of communism practices. I recently saw a plan to ration out how much red meat Americans can eat in a day/month. This communist practice is being disguised as a movement to fight climate change. This is an example of why we must go to St. Joseph with our intentions and hearts to not only save ourselves but save our nation.



I will be discussing the Terror of Demons section in further detail in tonight's live chat but I want to share a podcast that this reading reminded me of. This is from the Abiding Together podcast Season 5. In this episode, the hosts are interviewing Fr. Mike Schmitz about the heart of a father. In the episode, they discuss the connection between our earthly fathers and God the Father. They also discuss vulnerability, restoration of the Church and femininity, and relationships with fathers, and the role of clergy. With what we know about St. Joseph and how we respect him, I encourage you to listen to this episode and reflect on how God the Father and St. Joseph work together. [Listen to the podcast here.](#)

Finally, the last section of today's Wonder discusses the privileges of devotion to St. Joseph. Just like following Jesus and being devoted to Mary, devotion to St. Joseph will not be free of suffering. Thankfully, the reward of such devotion is far greater than the struggles.

*For prayer today, pray a decade of the rosary for your personal intention of full consecration to St. Joseph. Ask for Jesus to heal the wounds in your heart so that you can fully trust in the spiritual fatherhood of St. Joseph.*

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 30**

The year of 2020 was filled with death, sadness, and fear. The coronavirus affected everyone even if they did not get sick. People's biggest fear appeared to be staring at them in the face more than ever—that fear is death. What many people have done in the wake of staring death in the face is try their best to avoid it or at least hold it off for as long as possible. Perhaps it was that reason that I took the death of my uncle so hard.

For you see, prior to dying with pneumonia and the coronavirus, my Uncle Scott did his best to avoid the dangers of the virus. He kept his distance, limited his activities, and wore his mask everywhere. Despite this, he laid in a hospital bed for over a month without visitors, slowly dying a painful death by himself. He was not even 50 years old and had so much life left to give. I often wonder if my daily rosary prayers did bring him a sense of peace in a lonely place such as a hospital room. I will never know because he lived the last few weeks of his life on a ventilator and was never given the opportunity to breathe the air God gave him again.

Upon reflecting on this over the past couple months since his death I have concluded the following: a happy death does not equate to dying in our sleep or with a smile on our face. Larry's grandma was blessed to die a death in her sleep with a smile on her face but most of us will not be so fortunate. This does not mean that our death will be unhappy. For it is not the last breath moment that determines whether our death is happy or not. It is all the moments throughout your life leading up to that last breath that determine if your death will be a happy one.

*So today, for our prayer, let us pray the Prayer of St. Alphonsus Ligouri for a Happy Death found on page 244.*

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 31**

Thanks to folklore, we picture dragon slayers as knights with long, dirty hair, bloody cuts on their faces, strong muscles, and heavy metal armor. Today we read about St. Joseph as the ultimate dragon/demon slayer. When we look at the picture of St. Joseph the Terror of Demons on page 318, we get a much different picture of what a dragon slayer is. St. Joseph is barefoot, his skin is glowing, he has no armor, there is a halo around his head, his spear has white lilies, and he does not have strong muscles. Instead, he carries a gentle dominance. St. Joseph represents the power in purity.

As we approach the end of our consecration journey, I pray that your understanding and reverence to St. Joseph has increased. An area that was a struggle for me in the beginning was claiming St. Joseph to be the greatest saint right behind Mary. There are hundreds of saints that we know of and countless more that we do not know. Surely, we can argue that there are other saints greater than St. Joseph. Claiming St. Joseph as the Terror of Demons is a unique and powerful title that no other saint holds—not even St. Michael the Archangel. This tells us that although the Church does not know much about St. Joseph because of his little appearance in Scripture, his impact on our salvation is close to that

of Jesus and Mary. He was the protector of Jesus and Mary and to do so—to carry out this role as wonderfully as he did—he must have been far purer than any other saint besides Mary.

It is St. Joseph's purity that threatens evil. For us, we try our best to stay pure. But once the devil senses weakness in our purity, he attacks. St. Joseph was able to remain strong and faithful in his purity. The devil could not touch him. Even when St. Joseph "doubted" the devil could not enter his heart because even St. Joseph's slumber was too powerful!

*Today, let us pray for purity.*

*Jesus, Lover of chastity, Mary, Mother most pure, and Joseph, chaste guardian of the Virgin, to you I come at this hour, begging you to plead with God for me. I earnestly wish to be pure in thought, word and deed in imitation of your own holy purity.*

*Obtain for me, then, a deep sense of modesty which will be reflected in my external conduct. Protect my eyes, the windows of my soul, from anything that might dim the luster of a heart that must mirror only Christlike purity.*

*And when the "Bread of Angels becomes the Bread of me" in my heart at Holy Communion, seal it forever against the suggestions of sinful pleasures.*

*Heart of Jesus, Fount of all purity, have mercy on us. Amen.*

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 32**

"Believers who respond to God's word and become members of Christ's Body, become intimately united with him...This is especially true of Baptism, which unites us to Christ's death and Resurrection, and the Eucharist, by which 'really sharing in the body of the Lord, we are taken up into communion with him and with one another (CCC 790).'" The teaching of the members of the Church as the mystical body of the Church is both a simple and a complex teaching. When we think of ourselves as one small cell of the entirety of the Church body this can make sense. However, the understanding of the mystical body of the Church can get muddled when we try to connect the idea that the Church is holy even when she is made up of unholy people.

Think about it further by reflecting on your own body. You, by Baptism and Confirmation, are the temple of the Holy Spirit. God dwells within you. Furthermore, when you receive Eucharist, Christ's body, soul, and divinity is within you. Despite the holy temple that is you, you commit sins, you do wrongs, and think negatively. Additionally, everyone's body has an ailment or illness at some point in life—so we are not perfect. This is the great mystery of the Church. Even though we are sinners and are imperfect, we are called to perfect holiness. The goodness of the holy ones that walk among us and the holy ones that dwell in heaven far exceed the evil that surrounds those on earth.

We could think of the marriage bond between Mary and St. Joseph as an earthly image of the mystical body and head of the Church. For the Church, Christ is the head, and we are the body. But St. Joseph also suffered and died for us. So, he could be pictured as an earthly head of the Church. Mary, in her holiness, would be the body of the Church. The two of them are forever bound by their purity and faithfulness to each other. Thanks be to God for giving us the protector St. Joseph!

Today's prayer: read and reflect on the following quote from St. Irenaeus. What is God saying to you when you read this quote? Follow up on that reflection with an action to build the Church.

*"Indeed, it is to the Church herself that the 'Gift of God' has been entrusted...In it is in her that communion with Christ has been deposited, that is to say: the Holy Spirit, the pledge of incorruptibility, the strengthening of our faith and the ladder of our ascent to God...For where the Church is, there also is God's spirit; where God's spirit is, there is the Church and every grace."*

### **Consecration to St. Joseph Day 33 & Consecration Day**

In today's reading, Fr. Calloway mentions the possibility of St. Joseph seated on the left-hand side of Jesus in heaven. This is an interesting concept and after our weeks of studying St. Joseph it seems very possible. The argument against this is the understanding that Jesus is seated at the right-hand side of God. Every week in the Nicene Creed at prayer, we

say, "He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father." If this is the case, then the left-hand seat of Jesus is not available:

God    Jesus    Mary  
      Vs.  
Joseph Jesus    Mary

However, this is if we are literally talking about "seats" in heaven. When we reflect on the meaning of a seat as a special honor and power given to people, we can see how there is the opportunity for St. Joseph to be at Jesus's left-hand. Let us think of it this way: the CEO (chief executive officer) of a company has a right-hand person to help run the company. That right-hand person is the COO (chief operating officer). The COO has his/her own left and right-hand positions. Those positions depend on the business, but they are usually the marketing executive and financial executive. When we focus on the honor rather than the physical location of "seats," we can agree that the role of left-hand of Jesus could certainly be and should be for Jesus's earthly father, St. Joseph.

You have made it to Consecration Day! Rejoice! Throughout this journey, I hope for devotion has increased and you have come to find St. Joseph as your loving and protective father. There are countless ways to remain consecrated to St. Joseph. Appendix B, found on page 263, has a list on things to do after Consecration Day. Just like our journey with Christ, it never ends. And as we learn more about St. Joseph, the more questions we have. Also like our relationship with Christ, the more we learn about St. Joseph and spend time in prayer with him, the more we love him. He is always there for you, to protect you, love you, and guide you.

*Today's prayer is a consecration prayer, select one you like from p. 235-239.*