



DAY FOUR

January 24, 2021

INTERCESSION

May expectant fathers lovingly support the mothers of their children in welcoming new life.

PRAYERS

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

REFLECTION

Fatherhood has its origins in God, who chose to reveal Himself to us as Our Father, sending his only Son for the sake of our salvation. Fathers therefore have a special role “in revealing and in reliving on earth the very fatherhood of God” (*Familiaris consortio* 25). Fathers are called to exhibit “generous responsibility for the life conceived under the heart of the mother” (*FC* 25). They are uniquely entrusted with the protection and defense of both mother and child and, in this way, in safeguarding the sanctity of human life.

As evidenced in our world today, the role of the father “is of unique and irreplaceable importance” (*FC* 25). Often women choose abortion because they do not have the support of the child’s father, or—even worse—the father of the child pressures her to make the decision to abort. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge with compassion that men can also be overwhelmed by an unexpected pregnancy and that society increasingly tells them that they should have no say in their children’s lives. In the face of these false messages, we pray that expectant fathers will find courage in the example of Saint Joseph—who embraced the role of father amid difficult circumstances—and offer loving, life-affirming support to the mothers of their children.

ACTS OF REPARATION *(choose one)*

- Give up sleeping on your pillow—or even your bed—tonight. Offer this small sacrifice for the intention that expectant fathers will courageously answer their call to support both mother and child.
- Pray a decade of the Rosary for all expectant fathers, that through her intercession, Our Lady may inspire in them the virtues of Saint Joseph: usccb.org/how-to-pray-the-rosary.
- Offer some other sacrifice, prayer, or act of penance that you feel called to do for today’s intention.

ONE STEP FURTHER

Research continues to show that one of the top reasons a woman chooses abortion is due to a lack of financial resources. Read *Poverty and Abortion: A Vicious Cycle*, which explores the connections between abortion and poverty, and how the absence of fathers contributes to this ongoing cycle (respectlife.org/poverty-and-abortion).



 9daysforlife.com

3 WAYS TO JOIN



Image: A mosaic of Our Lady of Guadalupe decorates a side altar in the Church of Santa Maria della Famiglia at the Vatican. Dec. 15. (CNS photo/Paul Haring.)
Familiaris consortio (On the Family), no. 25 © 1981, Libreria Editrice Vaticana. Used with permission. All rights reserved. Copyright © 2020, USCCB, Washington, DC. All rights reserved.