Last Thursday we were blessed to have Father Donald Calloway, MIC speak at the Our Lady of Victory Cathedral Center. This world-renowned speaker and author shared with us a treasure trove of information about St. Joseph, almost all of which you can find in his book that has sold thousands of copies all around the world, “Consecration to St. Joseph.” In this article, I’ll recap some of his main points and how they can apply to our families, but you can also listen to the full talk at these links:

1. YouTube: [https://youtu.be/5g2URHfy6d4](https://youtu.be/5g2URHfy6d4)
2. Podcast: [https://www.buzzsprout.com/1404520](https://www.buzzsprout.com/1404520)

Father Calloway took us through 4 important points on St. Joseph. First of all, that the church has a long history of devotion to this glorious saint. Here are some quotes from ages past by saints that honored him long before the widespread devotion we see developing today.

“There are many saints to whom God has given the power to assist us in the necessities of life, but the power given to St. Joseph is unlimited: It extends to all our needs, and all those who invoke him with confidence are sure to be heard.” - St. Thomas Aquinas (13th century)

“Whoever fails to find a Master to teach him how to pray, should choose this glorious Saint, and he will not go astray.” - St. Teresa of Avila (16th century)

“In Joseph … heads of the household are blessed with the unsurpassed model of fatherly watchfulness and care.” Pope Leo XIII (19th century)

We see from these 3 quotes that St. Joseph is ready to help us with any of our needs, and has great intercessory power. If there is something you or your family are struggling with right now, go to Joseph! This is what Father Calloway encouraged all of us to do again and again that evening, whether it be a family member away from the church, an illness, or a personal vice, St. Joseph can help us through everything!

Another important point Father Calloway made during his talk was that we almost had a Pope Joseph! Yes, St. Pope John XXIII nearly took this name, but decided on John to honor his earthly father. Perhaps one day we will have a Pope Joseph, but our current pope—Pope Francis—has done some very exciting things to further devotion to St. Joseph. Namely, adding St. Joseph to all 4 Eucharistic prayers said during Mass, and of course inaugurating the first ever Year of St. Joseph! Father Calloway emphasized how we will likely not see another Year of St. Joseph during our lifetime, so we should take advantage of every ounce of grace being offered to us this year. To name a few...
There are many ways to obtain a plenary indulgence this year. A plenary indulgence, according to the website of the Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh, "is a particularly powerful way to obtain remission of punishment -- on earth or in purgatory -- that would have resulted from sins that were already forgiven. It covers all sins, mortal or venial, that the recipient has committed up to that time, if the person sincerely repents, detests their sins and fulfills all requirements of the indulgence." Some ways to obtain a plenary indulgence during the Year of St. Joseph include:

1. Meditate for at least 30 minutes on the Our Father
2. Participate in a spiritual retreat of at least one day that includes a meditation on Saint Joseph
3. Perform a corporal or spiritual work of mercy
4. Recite the Holy Rosary in families and between the husband and wife
5. Pray any lawfully approved prayer or act of piety in honor of Saint Joseph, for example “To you oh blessed Joseph,” especially on: March 19th (Solemnity of St. Joseph), May 1st (Feast of St. Joseph the Worker), December 26th (Feast of the Holy Family), The Sunday of Saint Joseph (according to the Byzantine tradition), the 19th day of every month, every Wednesday (a day dedicated to the memory of the Saint according to the Latin tradition)

For the full list, visit https://yearofstjoseph.org/indulgences. These are amazing opportunities for us to grow in holiness! The plenary indulgence is granted under the usual conditions, and ewtn.com has some helpful information. In summary, a plenary indulgence can be gained only once a day, and in order to obtain it, the faithful must, in addition to being in the state of grace, have the interior disposition of complete detachment from sin, even venial sin, have sacramentally confessed their sins, receive the Holy Eucharist, and pray for the intentions of the Pope. It is sufficient that these sacred rites and prayers be carried out within several days (about 20) before or after the indulgenced act.

Think of the difference this can mean for our families. By participating in these acts, obtaining indulgences, and being freed from the effects of sin in our lives, we can be more free to live a life of love among our family members. Let’s make it a point to take advantage of these opportunities!

One great way to do this is by honoring St. Joseph on Father’s Day. I discuss this more in my article in the Catholic Lighthouse this month on page 13, and some of the suggestions would actually align with the 5 ways to obtain an indulgence above, especially #5. But perhaps the best way to honor St. Joseph would be to complete the consecration to him if you haven’t already. Father Calloway’s book is easy to read, fun, informative and suitable for families. I’d recommend the children to be around age 10 if reading along with parents, but for younger children, parents can always explain the content in kid-friendly language. Please consider making the consecration, and Father Calloway’s website includes suggested dates, as well as a link to order his book: https://www.fathercalloway.com.

May God bless you and your loves ones this month, and especially on Father’s Day! Together, let us go to Joseph! And obtain the help we need in following Jesus, and drawing closer to the Virgin Mary.