

Saint Joseph: A Man with a Father's Heart

Pope Francis commemorated the 150th anniversary of Saint Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church by declaring a “Year of Saint Joseph” to extend from December 8, 2020, to December 8, 2021. In his apostolic letter *With a Father's Heart (Patris corde)*, Pope Francis asks us to remember Saint Joseph as a “beloved father, a tender and loving father, an obedient father, an accepting father; a father who is creatively courageous, a working father, a father in the shadows.”



A pandemic, civil unrest, economic insecurity, and societal change have left many of us feeling a bit like collective orphans this past year. We long for the protection and comfort that a good father gives to his children, and while we know that God is always our loving Father, sometimes we need to have a flesh-and-blood example of what it means to be a “dad.”

Saint Joseph offers us that. Joseph was the man who taught Jesus what it meant to give an honest day's work for an honest wage, a man who showed Jesus what it meant to keep your word to the woman you loved even when it was difficult, a man who lived his faith. In short, he was a man who exemplified a “father's heart.”

Saint Joseph's life is “a sacrificial service to the mystery of the incarnation and its redemptive purpose. He employed his legal authority over the Holy Family to devote himself completely to them in his life and work. He turned his human vocation to domestic love into a superhuman oblation of himself, his heart and all his abilities, a love placed at the service of the Messiah who was growing to maturity in his home.” —*Saint Paul VI*

Let us pray:

Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
To you God entrusted his only Son;
in you Mary placed her trust;
with you Christ became man.
Blessed Joseph, to us too,
show yourself a father
and guide us in the path of life.
Obtain for us grace, mercy, and courage,
and defend us from every evil.
Amen. —*Pope Francis*