

# A Pastor's Perspective

February 14, 2021 Bulletin



Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

This column completes this synopsis of the Holy Father's recent teaching on St. Joseph, *Patris Corde*, that is, ***With a Father's Heart***.

**Teaching – Week IV: St. Joseph is a father in the shadows.** To conclude his teaching, Pope Francis highlights the novel, *The Shadow of the Father* (by Polish author Jan Dobraczyński), in which St. Joseph is depicted as an earthly shadow of our heavenly Father. Just as the heavenly Father guides St. Joseph, St. Joseph guides the child Jesus. Every child needs a father or a father-figure, that is, someone who accepts responsibility to care for that child, to nurture him/her with a chaste and self-giving love that allows the child to grow naturally, to live in freedom responsibly, and to embrace one's vocation joyfully. As the earthly father of Jesus, St. Joseph was a model of this divine love that is protective yet never possessive, strong yet always respectful of the other.

**Lesson – Week IV:** Fathers, father-figures, and spiritual fathers are essential for the health of families and communities, including the Church. Pope Francis reminds us that through every exercise of fatherhood, we are called to be “a ‘sign’ pointing to a greater fatherhood.” We are invited to invoke the assistance of St. Joseph in carrying out our everyday work, commitments and responsibilities, which guarantees that we have a powerful yet gentle guardian, faithful father, and holy intercessor on our side (as near to us as our own shadow).

And so we pray, as does Pope Francis:

*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.*

For more information or to view additional resources about St. Joseph during this year dedicated to him, please visit the diocesan website: [portlanddiocese.org/year-of-saint-joseph](http://portlanddiocese.org/year-of-saint-joseph).

*Peace and blessings,*

*Msgr. Andrew*