

A Pastor's Perspective

February 7, 2021 Bulletin



Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

This column continues to review the Holy Father's recent teaching on St. Joseph, *Patris Corde*, that is, *With a Father's Heart*.

Teaching – Week III: St. Joseph is a creatively courageous and working father. St. Joseph had to face several challenges that probably invoked fear and perhaps seemed insurmountable: Mary was found to be with child; the Emperor demanded a census that required an arduous journey by Joseph and his pregnant wife to his ancestral town of Bethlehem; once there, without any available lodging, Joseph had to provide shelter for Mary in a stable, where she gave birth to Jesus; their newborn child then became the target of Herod's murderous plot, which forced the family to flee to a foreign land; and later on, the family became alarmed when the young boy Jesus seemed to separate himself from his family caravan and become lost while the family is on pilgrimage.

Even one of these situations might overwhelm any of us; yet St. Joseph manages to protect Mary and Jesus and to provide for their needs. He does so because of his deep faith in God and his willingness to do whatever the Lord commands; he also has the ability to put aside his own dreams, hope and desires, to work hard, and to make sacrifices for the welfare of others. Using his God-given ingenuity and abilities, St. Joseph participates in and cooperates with the work of salvation. Pope Francis then explains that because St. Joseph loves "the child and his mother," he also has the grace of being able to identify with all who are poor, persecuted, sick and suffering.

Lesson – Week III: All husbands and fathers face difficulties that arouse anxiety and induce uncertainty. Yet St. Joseph reminds every husband and father, in fact, the entire Church, of our responsibility to step out with courage, to use our gifts and talents creatively, and to roll up our sleeves and work by caring for our brothers and sisters in need whenever, wherever and however we find them.

Peace and blessings,

Msgr. Andrew