

Consecration the St. Joseph

Part 19

Joseph Most Courageous, Pray for Us

So perfectly was he [St. Joseph] dead to the world and the flesh, that he desired nothing but the things of heaven. – St. Bridget of Sweden

St. Joseph desired nothing but the things of heaven. He lived entirely for love of Jesus Christ, and, after Mary, is Jesus' most faithful disciple. St. Joseph is the father of Jesus, but he is also a disciple of Jesus. It takes courage to be a faithful disciple of Jesus. Many are willing to follow Jesus when it is pleasant, but not many are willing to follow Jesus when it is difficult and filled with sorrow. St. Joseph was always faithful, always courageous.

In different translations of the Litany of St. Joseph, the title "Most Courageous" is sometimes rendered as "Most Valiant" or "Most Strong." The three titles have the same essential meaning: St. Joseph was courageous and fearless. He feared nothing other than offending God and exercised tremendous fortitude in his protection of Jesus and Mary. Fortitude is a cardinal virtue that strengthens the will and gives a person courage and a firm resolve to do God's will, even in the midst of great suffering.

St. Joseph is a man of courage. The root word of courage is "cour," meaning "heart." To be courageous is to love the good more than you fear evil and suffering. The courageous man is stouthearted, bold and brave in the midst of trials. That St. Joseph was courageous, no one can deny. It took courage for St. Joseph to take his family into enemy territory (Egypt). He knew that he might need to defend his wife and Child against physical assault, and he was willing to do it. No man who is easily intimidated would embark on such a journey. St. Joseph is intimidated by no one.

St. Joseph will help you to be courageous. To be a saint, you must be courageous. If you imitate St. Joseph, you will not hesitate to enter enemy territory or undergo spiritual combat. Egypt was a land notorious for thieves, pagan rituals, idols and sorcerers. St. Joseph fears no man because God is with him. Your spiritual father is a man on fire with love for God! "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31).

St. Joseph will increase the virtue of fortitude in you. Do you remember the passage in Scripture when Jesus came walking on the water to his disciples? The disciples were terrified, and Jesus had to calm their spirits, saying: "Take courage! It is I. Do not be afraid" (Matthew 14:27). What about you? What are you afraid of? Losing your job? Sacrificing your good name and worldly honors? St. Joseph sacrificed everything for love of Jesus and Mary. Your spiritual father was a poor man and of no esteem in the world. Yet demons and the sorcerers of Egypt were terrified of the courageous heart of St. Joseph.

Jesus himself learned courage from the example of St. Joseph. Jesus witnessed his father's courage in Egypt, Nazareth, Jerusalem and the many other places they traveled together. St. Joseph gave his Son an example of manly love, courage, strength and fortitude. With St. Joseph as your spiritual father, you also have nothing to be afraid of. Our Lord himself, immediately before his suffering and death, instructed his disciples to exercise manly courage, telling them, "In the world you will have trouble, but take courage, I have conquered the world" (John 16:33). Set your face toward the heavenly Jerusalem and never look back!

O Joseph, virgin father of Jesus, most pure spouse of the Virgin Mary, pray for us daily to the Son of God, that, armed with the weapons of his grace, we may fight as we ought in life, and be crowned by him in death. – St. Bernadine of Siena

Litany of St. Joseph

Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, hear us.
Christ, graciously hear us.

God the Father of Heaven, have mercy on us.
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy on us.
God the Holy Ghost, have mercy on us.
Holy Trinity, One God, have mercy on us.

Holy Mary, pray for us
St. Joseph,
Noble scion of David,
Light of the Patriarchs,
Spouse of the Mother of God,
Chaste Guardian of the Virgin,
Foster-father of the Son of God,
Sedulous Defender of Christ,
Head of the Holy Family,
Joseph most just,
Joseph most chaste,
Joseph most prudent,
Joseph most valiant,
Joseph most obedient,
Joseph most faithful,
Mirror of patience,
Lover of poverty,
Model of all who labor,
Glory of family life,
Protector of virgins,
Pillar of families,
Consolation of the afflicted,
Hope of the sick,
Patron of the dying,
Terror of the demons,
Protector of Holy Church,

Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world, spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world, graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

V. He made him the lord of his household.

R. And prince over all his possessions.

Let us pray. God, Who, in Thine ineffable Providence didst vouchsafe to choose blessed Joseph to be the Spouse of Thy most holy Mother; grant, we beseech Thee, that we may be worthy to have him for our intercessor in Heaven whom, on earth, we venerate as our protector. Who livest and reignest world without end. Amen

