

PRAXIS: The Foster Father of the King — Burning Devotion to Saint Joseph

PRAYER TO SAINT JOSEPH

Saint Joseph, father and guardian of virgins,
to whose faithful keeping Christ Jesus, innocence itself,
and Mary, the virgin of virgins, were entrusted,
I pray and beseech you by that twofold and most precious charge,
by Jesus and Mary,
to save me from all uncleanness,
to keep my mind untainted, my heart pure, and my body chaste;
and to help me always to serve Jesus and Mary in perfect chastity. Amen.

PRAXIS — Joseph: The Essentials of Authentic, Restored Manhood

- I. Joseph reverses the Neglect, Cowardice, and Disobedience of Adam
 - A. Adam's failure to "till and keep" the Garden of Eden
 1. Fails to protect Eve from the attack of the devil
 2. Does not help Eve remain focused upon the Father's will
 3. Shares in her disobedience and blames God and her
 4. Hides from God Who seeks him
 5. Legacy: Forbidden fruit that poisons us with sin unto death
 - B. Joseph's success in "tilling and keeping"
 1. Protects Mary from the attack of the Devil through Herod
 2. Shares in Mary's focus on obeying the Father's will
 3. Shares in Mary's obedience and loves God and her
 3. Seeks God and heeds His message given through angels
 5. Legacy: The Fruit of Mary's womb Who heals us with grace unto eternal life
- II. Moving beyond gardening to building ("tilling") and protecting ("keeping") the Kingdom
 - A. Joseph — not a gardener, but a carpenter
 1. He remembers the garden but works with greater grace to build God's Kingdom with its anticipated completion beyond him in the future.
 2. Garden > Tabernacle > Temple > Christ's Body and Mystical Body
 3. Purpose of Work in Christ
 - a. To glorify God by building His Kingdom (to complete His Creation)
 - b. To defend this Kingdom (protect God's Family)
 - B. Joseph — the Authentic Father/King — "Holding the Line" as the Son of David
 1. King Joseph and Queen Mary — They accept, embrace, and raise the "King of Kings, and Lord of Lords."
 2. Primacy of Holiness (of Grace): The Holy Family — "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God — not because of works, lest any man boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 1: 8-10)

3. Chastity as our Vision: “Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God.” (Luke 5: 8)
4. The “Little Way”
 - a. Holy poverty — simplicity
 - b. Humility
 - c. Authentic courage — “Do not fear to take Mary as your wife” (Matthew 1: 20)—to be holy **FOR** The Holy Ones = Sacrificial Love

III. Joseph — Model for men **TO BE** and for women **TO EXPECT** men to be

QUESTIONS

- I. Knowing that Mary has conceived her child by the power of the Holy Spirit, what reasons would Joseph have to fear taking Mary as his wife?
- II. Who presents the greatest challenge in Joseph’s life: 1) The Devil, 2) Herod, 3) Relatives and Fellow Jews, 4) Mary, 5) Jesus, 6) Himself?

MISSION

- I. Morning: Prayer to Saint Joseph
- II. Mental Prayer: 5/5/5 (children) or 10/10/10 (teen/adult)
 - A. Gospel of the Day or Any Passages from Scripture
 - B. Stories or Writings of Saints
 - C. Passages from Theological or Catechetical Writings
 - D. Particular Decades of the Rosary
 - E. Visual Images
- III. Examination of Conscience followed by an Act of Contrition: Did I Imitate Saint Joseph?
 - A. Did I leave room for silence today? Did I listen more than speak today? Did I listen and speak with charity and mercy in my heart or with judgment and malice in it? Did I gossip and tear down others, or seek to help and build up others?
 - B. If someone apparently did something wrong, did I hold this against this person or did I rather seek to do what is best for this person? Did I tend to size up people and dismiss them, or did I see them as having mysterious lives interwoven by God’s design with mine, all for His glory and for the benefit of all concerned?
 - C. Was my work today motivated by a spirit of loving service to others and of glorification of God? Did I intentionally carry out my work as the means that God uses to complete His work of creation on earth?
 - D. Did I “treasure” Jesus and Mary in my heart throughout the day?