

PRAYER IN CELEBRATION OF THE FEAST OF ST. JOSEPH

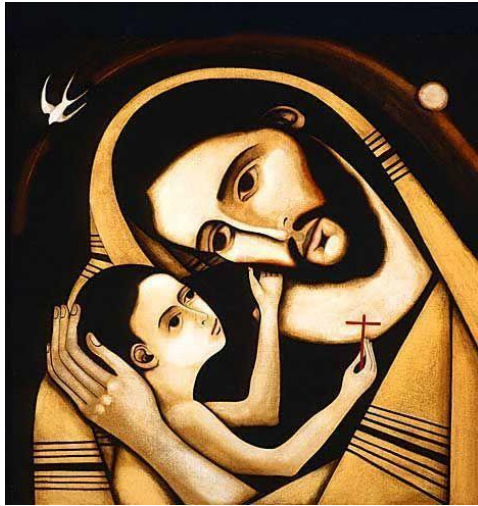


Image courtesy of Pinterest

All: Gathering Prayer

Loving God, you entrusted your son Jesus to the care of Joseph, our patron. In his spirit of gentleness, peace and joy so may this Congregation and each of us serve those whom you place in our care. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Opening Song/Hymn of your choice

You may wish to consider one of the following:

CBW # 456, # 445, # 449 or one of the hymns to Joseph written by a member of the Congregation

Leader: We know little of Joseph from Scripture but from what we do know, through brief references in the Gospels, we can identify gifts of Joseph that inspired Fr. Jean-Pierre Medaille, our founding members, Sisters, Agrégées, Associates, and the gifts that continue to inspire each of us today in the reception and living out of our charism. So, as we celebrate this Feast of St Joseph, we reflect together:

Reader 1

Joseph was a man of faith

Mt. 1: 18-25

"Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus" .. When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded (invited) and took Mary home as his wife.

A moment of contemplative reflection

Continuing reading (Sr. Marianne Race, CSJ – Catholic Mobilizing Network)

Joseph, you entered into the mystery of God's unfolding love. Your tender compassion, heartfelt mercy and great love toward Mary and Jesus reveal God's glory. You allowed the Merciful One to flow through your daily life. You experienced doubt, confusion, poverty and oppression. Yet you trusted God's mercy and remained faithful, and were grounded in God's unconditional love. Pray for us and for the world that in the midst of violence, and difficulties we may be constant witnesses to God's mercy and great love. Amen.

Reader 2

Joseph was a dreamer – a listener for the whisper of God's will.

Mt. 2: 13-15:

An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him." So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the God had said through the prophet: "Out of Egypt I called my son."

A moment of contemplative reflection

Continuing reading (Mary Cresp, RSJ, - "In the Spirit of Joseph")

Matthew's Gospel tells us that another important way in which Joseph heard what he was being called to was through the language of the inner self, the unconscious, where God speaks....It was through listening to God in his dreams that Joseph learnt his vocation. ...Through attending to the dream, Joseph learnt that he, along with Mary, was to play an active part in the coming of the Messiah. In bringing the gift of himself and allowing the Holy Spirit to work through him, Joseph enabled God's story to take shape. Christian belief is that God's dream takes perfect shape in Jesus. The early Church saw that this dream continued to be lived out in their being the Body of Christ.

Some sharing with another person or small group or, if alone, some reflection.

How am I/are we living God's dream in our day-to-day life and how are we called to be in the world today for a future yet unfolding?

How are we called to journey in the here and now – where is our "Egypt" and why?

If praying in a group you may invite a Sister, Associate/Companion to offer a brief reflection on how the spirit of St. Joseph has impacted or guided her or his life

Reader 3: Maxim 1 with a reflection from Marcia Allen, CSJ: "Love's Design"

Keep always in mind the aim of your vocation which is sublime; and never do anything

which contradicts the commitment to a life full of modesty, gentleness and holiness (Maxim 1) "This first maxim actually summarizes all of the one hundred maxims. It describes the spirituality of the vocation as well as the call and characteristics it contains. It explains how the vocation is an elegant design, that is, a replica of the beauty of God's Design for creation and our part in it."

Leader: A suggested ritual and action

It is customary in many parts of the world on the Solemnity of St. Joseph to bless bread, pastries and other food and to give a large portion of it to those who are hungry and in need. Perhaps, at this point in the prayer you may wish to offer such a blessing for later distribution of gifts.

From the Writings of Fr. Medaille (Règlements of the Daughters of St. Joseph)

In honour of Saint Joseph, they will be all unity and charity with one another and toward the neighbour without distinction for whom they will try to have a cordial love such as St. Joseph had for his dear spouse and for the Savior Jesus.

All: Closing Prayer

As we continue to celebrate the Feast of St. Joseph, we pray to reflect in our lives the gifts of Joseph. May we, like him, be women and men of faith in intimate relationship with the Word enfleshed. May we be open to God's will in each moment, in the sometimes ordinariness and hard work of life. May we align ourselves with God's Design and may we dream a world of love, of hope, of peace. With Joseph may we be protectors of all that is given us; protectors of others and all of creation. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Closing Song: "Joseph the Carpenter" – Richard Cootes (used with permission of the composer)

<https://youtu.be/vbO6cMDv3G4>

