

## **One**

St. Joseph is our spiritual father, protector, and provider.

God's plan is to create a family in which all the members play their specific part and take care of one another. God gives us the immense dignity of being His adopted sons and daughters and the further dignity of sharing in and expressing his power and goodness by helping one another.

In God's plan, Mary would be not only the Mother of Jesus but also the Spiritual Mother of all people. Joseph was the foster father, protector, and provider of Jesus. He continues to care for Jesus in us if we turn to him.

We are free and neither God nor his saints or angels will force their help upon us. Those who use their free will and turn to Mary and Joseph receive the benefit of their maternal and paternal care.

The Church encourages us to consecrate ourselves not only to Mary but also to St. Joseph. When we consecrate ourselves to Joseph, saying yes to his help, then we open ourselves up to his miraculous care.

The Son of God made a conscious decision to place himself under the obedience, care, and protection of Joseph. In imitation of Jesus, we make the same choice by consecration to Joseph and receive in return the care of this illustrious spiritual father.

## **Two**

### **Teresa of Avila and her challenge**

Around the age of 23, Teresa of Avila was paralyzed and after three and a half years of immense suffering, she turned to St. Joseph who obtained her miraculous healing. She writes, “I took for my advocate and lord the glorious St. Joseph and earnestly recommended myself to him. I saw clearly that as in this need so in other greater ones concerning honor and loss of soul this father and lord of mine came to my rescue in better ways than I knew how to ask for. I don't recall up to this day ever having petitioned him for anything that he failed to grant. It is an amazing thing the great many favors God has granted me through the mediation of this blessed saint, the dangers I was freed from both of body and soul. For with other saints, it seems the Lord has given them grace to be of help in one need, whereas with this glorious saint I have experience that he helps in all our needs and that the Lord wants to us understand that just as He was subject to St. Joseph on earth -- for since bearing the title of father, being the Lord's tutor, Joseph could give the Child command -- so in heaven God does whatever he commands.”

### **Three**

Teresa of Avila teaches us that St. Joseph is the patron of the spiritual life and will help you become better at prayer and enjoy it more.

She writes, “Anyone who cannot find a master to teach him prayer should take this glorious saint for his master, and he will not go astray. I have not known anyone truly devoted to him and rendering him special services who has not advanced more in virtue. For in a powerful way he benefits souls who recommend themselves to him...If the request is somewhat out of line, he rectifies it for my greater good.”

Teresa gives us this challenge, “I only ask for the love of God anyone who does not believe me to try, and he will see through experience the

great good that comes from recommending oneself to this glorious patriarch and being devoted to him.”

## **Four**

The Seven Privileges of St. Joseph according to Mary of Agreda, “I have been informed concerning certain privileges conferred upon St. Joseph by the Most High on account of his great holiness, which are especially important to those who ask his intercession in a proper manner. In virtue of these special privileges the intercession of St. Joseph is most powerful.

First, for attaining the virtue of purity and overcoming the disordered desires and vices.

Second, for procuring powerful help to escape sin and return to the friendship of God.

Third, for increasing the love and devotion to most holy Mary.

Fourth, for securing the grace of a happy death and protection against the demons in that hour.

Fifth, for filling the demons with terror at the mere mention of his name.

Sixth, for gaining health of body and assistance in all kinds of difficulties.

Seventh, for securing the blessing of many children in families.

## **Five**

**Joseph even cares for fools**

Before I was experienced in international travel, my wife Sandy and I took our three oldest kids, ages 13 to 11, to Medjugorje. Before we left, a friend of mine told me, that rather than exchanging money in America, just take your debit card and a Discover card and get money in Europe. So we flew into Venice because I was friends with the rector of the seminary there. Immediately, we went to an ATM at a bank, inserted my debit card, and the bank confiscated it and mailed it back to America. All we were left with was a Discover card, which no one takes in Europe. We gathered up what cash we had, which was about 250 dollars, and we took a ferry across the Adriatic Sea to Croatia.

The ferry ride was paid for, but our room was in the very bottom of the ship and the kids freaked out, so we had to move rooms, which we were billed for when we got off the ship. Because we had no money, the captain of the ship wouldn't let us off in Croatia. And while we were pleading with the Captain, our van driver arrived. He immediately paid for the ferry. I informed him I had no money. I couldn't even pay him, to which he responded, "No problem, it's all paid for." As we drove to Medjugorje, thinking that he didn't understand me, I tried to explain that we couldn't pay him. He kept repeating, "It's not a problem." So I asked his name, to which he responded, "Beppo," which means, "Joseph."

We knew immediately that God had sent St. Joseph to take care of us. And from that point forward, people paid for every step of our journey. Every meal, every room, every vehicle until we arrived home in America.

So, we went to encounter Mary and with her, we met Joseph in the most powerful way. So, don't forget Joseph. Go to St. Joseph for all your needs and you too will experience his care!