

Consecration the St. Joseph

Part 23

Lover of Poverty, Pray for Us

Truly, I doubt not that the angels, wondering and adoring, came thronging in countless multitudes to that poor workshop to admire the humility of him who guarded that dear and divine child, and labored at his carpenter's trade to support the Son and the mother who were committed to his care. – St. Francis de Sales

St. Joseph was unpretentious in the eyes of the world. He had no worldly ambition or desire for recognition.

Throughout the centuries, people have often wondered what the financial status of the Holy Family was, or what their living conditions were. To answer this question, we need look no further than the New Testament. The Holy Family was poor. Very poor.

St. Joseph was so lowly and poor in the sight of the world that the Wise Men who entered the stable in Bethlehem did not even acknowledge his presence (see Matthew 2:11). When the Holy Family journeyed to the Temple in Jerusalem to participate in the Jewish ritual of purification for a new mother, Joseph could not even afford to purchase a lamb for a burnt offering (see Leviticus 12:6 – 7). Lambs were expensive. St. Joseph could only afford a poor man's gift, that is, two turtledoves or two young pigeons (see Leviticus 12:8).

The Holy Family lived on Divine Providence. Had Baby Jesus not been given gold, frankincense and myrrh by the Wise Men in Bethlehem (see Matthew 2:11), it is likely that St. Joseph would not have had money to purchase food and other necessities for his family when they traveled to Egypt. When they had left from Nazareth for Jerusalem to fulfill the census, they had not brought many things with them because they expected to return to Nazareth. The gifts of the Wise Men was God's providential way of taking care of the Holy Family. Years later, after returning to Nazareth from Egypt, the Holy Family lived for almost thirty years in a house in Nazareth that was simple and small.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:3). Have you ever wondered what that actually means? Is Jesus saying that poverty is wonderful? No, that is not what he is saying. What he is saying is that those who are detached from the things of this world are not far from the Kingdom of Heaven. When a person is detached from the things of this world, poverty is understood to be a virtue. The person who is detached from material things is truly blessed in spirit and rich in the sight of God. This explains why St. Joseph is called "Lover of Poverty." He relied on Divine Providence for all of his needs.

St. Joseph will help you be poor in spirit. St. Joseph will teach you how to be detached from material things and abandoned to Divine Providence. You will never find true happiness in material goods. Those who allow their relationship with God to depend on whether they have worldly things are destined for unhappiness. The person who is poor in spirit, on the other hand, is able to proclaim, "The Lord gave the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job 1:21).

The silence of St. Joseph proves his greatness and poverty of spirit. Everyone likes to boast of their achievements and have others acknowledge their work. St. Joseph, however, never saw the results of his hard work and sacrifice. He trusted that God would bring good fruit from his labor a years of service to Jesus and Mary. And God did – more than St. Joseph could have ever imagined. He was poor in the world, but rich in the Kingdom of Heaven.

He [St. Joseph] lived content it is poverty. – St. Bonaventure

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

