

PARISH FAMILY PRAXIS (12-13–20)

OPENING PRAYER

Saint Joseph, son of David and Patron of the Universal Church,
we entrust our campaign—Building God’s Kingdom from Within—
to your intercession.

The heavenly Father made you foster father of His Son, our King,
and husband of His Son’s mother Mary, our Queen.

Indeed, God the Father gave you responsibility for His Family
and for the building of His Kingdom.

Therefore, Saint Joseph, as father, foster in us authentic adoration of the Bread of Life;
as husband, teach us true devotion in purity of heart for Mary;
as visionary and carpenter and saint,
help us to accept God’s designs delivered to us by angels,
to build a church beautiful and magnificent like Mary,
and to worship the Bread of Angels in both Spirit and Truth.

Finally, may your example of radiant simplicity and profound silence
be manifest in the particular church God builds through our hearts and hands,
and may the Father bring to completion whatever good work
He has begun in each of us,
for His glory and blessings upon all. Amen.

SACRED SEVEN

- ___ 1. In the Gospel of Matthew, we read of Joseph making crucial decision based on four dreams.
- ___ 2. Saint Thomas Aquinas and Saint Bernard of Clairvaux argue that Joseph, when first finding out that Mary was pregnant, suspected her of committing adultery.
- ___ 3. The names “Emmanuel” and “Jesus” mean exactly the same thing.
- ___ 4. Not only Herod, but all of Jerusalem with him, were troubled by the wise men’s query regarding the whereabouts of the newborn King of the Jews.
- ___ 5. Joseph named Mary’s child “Jesus” because an angel of God commanded him to do this.
- ___ 6. The chief priests and scribes refuse to share any prophetic information with Herod because they know him to be an evil man.
- ___ 7. Scripture indicates that the number of wise men searching for the newborn King of the Jews was three.

PRAXIS: DEVOTION TO SAINT JOSEPH: Challenges in Joseph’s Life and Time = Challenges of our Time:

- I. Blind and/or Malicious Leadership—Secular and Spiritual:
 - A. The Chief Priests and Scribes
 - B. King Herod
 - C. Methods of Response:
 - 1. Righteousness—God first (state of grace)
 - 2. Obedience to God’s Law
 - 3. Ready response to holy inspiration
- II. Threats to Mary and Jesus, to the Families in Bethlehem:
 - A. Misunderstanding could lead to Mary’s stoning to death
 - B. The murder of the holy innocents
 - C. Methods of Response:
 - 1. Obedience to God’s directives (humility/simplicity)
 - 2. Primacy of one’s vocation to marriage and family
 - 3. Heroic leadership when surrounded by horrible leaders
 - 4. Guardianship of the Eucharist and of Mary, of the family and of the unborn
- III. Discerning how to obey God in trial:
 - A. Mary’s miraculous pregnancy
 - B. Cherishing and protecting Mary and Jesus
 - C. Methods of Response:
 - 1. Embrace reality—practical, evident, and mystical
 - 2. Devotion—take the first step and follow through
 - 3. Scrap an initial game plan for God’s adjusted game plan
- IV. Welcoming the Poor and Strangers:
 - A. The Shepherds
 - B. The Wise Men
 - C. Method of Response:
 - 1. Welcome those centered on Christ and on the vulnerable one(s)
 - 2. Welcome all who come “to give”—whether poor or rich
- V. Living as a Poor Stranger and in Hiddenness:
 - A. Flight to Egypt
 - B. Carpenter in Nazareth
 - C. Methods of Response:
 - 1. Acceptance of trial and the poverty necessitated by it
 - 2. “Creative hiddenness” and embracing the ordinary
- VI. Crowning Justice with Love:
 - A. Unique Marriage to a Virgin Mother
 - B. Embracing service of perfect persons as an imperfect person
 - C. Methods of Response:
 - 1. Respect for Marriage/Family and Celibacy/Virginity
 - 2. True humility and responsiveness to grace and the Holy Spirit—universal vocations to holiness and love

QUESTIONS

- I. In the cases both of Mary's miraculous pregnancy and of the finding of Jesus in the Temple, what does Joseph show us about how to respond to misunderstandings within a family?
- II. The Jews were divided into many camps when Joseph was alive—what does Joseph reveal to us about remaining faithful and loving within a divided Church?
- III. The Jewish people along with Christ's family were under attack from government power—what does Joseph show us about how to respond to the secular attacks upon our Church during this time?

MISSION

- I. Morning Prayer—Include the “Signum Crucis,” “Pater Noster,” “Ave Maria,” “Gloria Patri,” and “Capital Campaign Prayer to Saint Joseph”
- II. Mid-Day Prayer—Particular examination of conscience with an Act of Contrition
- III. Daily Mental Prayer—Conversing with Saint Joseph
- IV. Nightly Examination of Conscience followed by the Confiteor:
Have I expressed my devotion to Saint Joseph by:
 - A. Showing devotion to Christ in the Eucharist through adoration and reverent reception of the Body of Christ in Holy Communion?
 - B. Showing devotion to Mary through a reverent praying of the Rosary this day?
 - C. Offering all my daily activity—especially my work—to God as a sacrifice of thanksgiving for His glory and to bring down light and blessings upon the world?
 - D. Entrusting my sleep and dreams to His intercession, that even my rest may become inspired and holy?