

Sixth Day **PATRON OF FAMILIES**

Saint Joseph, I venerate you as the gentle head of the Holy Family. The Holy Family was the scene of your life's work in its origin, in its guidance, in its protection, in your labor for Jesus and Mary, and even in your death in their arms. You lived, moved, and acted in the loving company of Jesus and Mary. The inspired writer describes your life at Nazareth in only a few words: "And (Jesus) went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them" (Luke, 2:51). Yet these words tell of your high vocation here on earth, and the abundance of graces which filled your soul during those years spent in Nazareth.

Your family life at Nazareth was all radiant with the light of divine charity. There was an intimate union of heart and mind among the members of your Holy Family. There could not have been a closer bond than that uniting you to Jesus, your foster-Son and to Mary, your most loving wife. Jesus chose to fulfill toward you, His foster-father, all the duties of a faithful son, showing you every mark of honor and affection due to a parent. And Mary showed you all the signs of respect and love of a devoted wife. You responded to this love and veneration from Jesus and Mary with feelings of deepest love and respect. You had for Jesus a true fatherly love, enkindled and kept aglow in your heart by the Holy Spirit. And you could not cease to admire the workings of grace in Mary's soul, and this admiration caused the holy love which you had consecrated to her on the day of your wedding grow stronger every day.

God has made you a heavenly patron of family life because you sanctified yourself as head of the Holy Family and thus by your beautiful example sanctified family life. How peacefully and happily the Holy Family rested under the care of your fatherly rule, even in the midst of trials. You were the protector, counselor, and consolation of the Holy Family in every need. And just as you were the model of piety, so you gave us by your zeal, your earnestness and devout trust in God's providence, and especially by your love, the example of labor according to the Will of God. You cherished all the experiences common to family life and the sacred memories of the life, sufferings, and joys in the company of Jesus and Mary. Therefore the family is dear to you as the work of God, and it is of the highest importance in your eyes to promote the honor of God and the well-being of man. In your loving fatherliness and unflinching intercession you are the patron and intercessor of families, and you deserve a place in every home.

Saint Joseph, I thank God for your privilege of living in the Holy Family and being its head. As a token of your own gratitude to God, obtain God's blessing upon my own family. Make our home the kingdom of Jesus and Mary -- a kingdom of peace, of joy, and love.

I also pray for all Christian families. Your help is needed in our day when God's enemy has directed his attack against the family in order to desecrate and destroy it. In the face of these evils, as patron of families, be pleased to help; and as of old, you arose to save the Child and His Mother, so today arise to protect the sanctity of the home. Make our homes sanctuaries of prayer, of love, of patient sacrifice, and of work. May they be modeled after your own at Nazareth. Remain with us with Jesus and Mary, so that by your help we may obey the commandments of God and of the Church; receive the holy sacraments of God and of the Church; live a life of prayer; and foster religious instruction in our homes. Grant that we may be reunited in God's Kingdom and eternally live in the company of the Holy Family in heaven.

***NOVENA PRAYER**

Novena to St. Joseph

***NOVENA PRAYER**

**(prayer to be said at the end of each day's devotion)*

Saint Joseph, I, your unworthy child, greet you. You are the faithful protector and intercessor of all who love and venerate you. You know that I have special confidence in you and that, after Jesus and Mary, I place all my hope of

salvation in you, for you are especially powerful with God and will never abandon your faithful servants. Therefore I humbly invoke you and commend myself, with all who are dear to me and all that belong to me, to your intercession. I beg of you, by your love for Jesus and Mary, not to abandon me during life and to assist me at the hour of my death. Glorious Saint Joseph, spouse of the Immaculate Virgin, obtain for me a pure, humble, charitable mind, and perfect resignation to the divine Will. Be my guide, my father, and my model through life that I may merit to die as you did in the arms of Jesus and Mary. Loving Saint Joseph, faithful follower of Jesus Christ, I raise my heart to you to implore your powerful intercession in obtaining from the Divine Heart of Jesus all the graces necessary for my spiritual and temporal welfare, particularly the grace of a happy death, and the special grace I now implore:

(Mention your request).

Guardian of the Word Incarnate, I feel confident that your prayers in my behalf will be graciously heard before the throne of God. **Amen.**

MEMORARE Remember, most pure spouse of Mary, ever Virgin, my loving protector, Saint Joseph, that no one ever had recourse to your protection or asked for your aid without obtaining relief. Confiding, therefore, in your goodness, I come before you and humbly implore you. Despise not my petitions, foster-father of the Redeemer, but graciously receive them. **Amen.**

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