

Christian Formation



“To See All Things New In Christ”

Did you know that we are in the **Year of St. Joseph** declared by Pope Francis?

The Pope said the CoVid-19 pandemic has drawn him to reflect more on St. Joseph, as many people during the pandemic have made hidden sacrifices to protect others, just as St. Joseph quietly protected and cared for Mary and Jesus. He released an Apostolic Letter **PATRIS CORDE – With A Father’s Heart** for us to reflect on. What better time to begin?

As taken from his letter – I would like to share some personal reflections on this extraordinary figure, so close to our own human experience. For, as Jesus says, “out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks” (Mt 12:34). My desire to do so increased during these months of pandemic, when we experienced, amid the crisis, how “our lives are woven together and sustained by ordinary people, people often overlooked. People who do not appear in newspaper and magazine headlines, or on the latest television show, yet in these very days are surely shaping the decisive events of our history. Doctors, nurses, storekeepers and supermarket workers, cleaning personnel, caregivers, transport workers, men and women working to provide essential services and public safety, volunteers, priests, men and women religious, and so very many others. They understood that no one is saved alone... How many people daily exercise patience and offer hope, taking care to spread not panic, but shared responsibility. How many fathers, mothers, grandparents and teachers are showing our children, in small everyday ways, how to accept and deal with a crisis by adjusting their routines, looking ahead and encouraging the practice of prayer. How many are praying, making sacrifices and interceding for the good of all”.^[6] Each of us can discover in Joseph – the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence – an intercessor, a support and a guide in times of trouble. Saint Joseph reminds us that those who appear hidden or in the shadows can play an incomparable role in the history of salvation. A word of recognition and of gratitude is due to them all.

Pope Francis reminds us - *Tenderness is the best way to touch the frailty within us. Pointing fingers and judging others are frequently signs of an inability to accept our own weaknesses, our own frailty. Only tender love will save us from the snares of the accuser (cf. Rev 12:10). That is why it is so important to encounter God's mercy, especially in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, where we experience his truth and tenderness.*

Our Holy Father explains - *Joseph, then, teaches us that faith in God includes believing that he can work even through our fears, our frailties and our weaknesses. He also teaches us that amid the tempests of life, we must never be afraid to let the Lord steer our course. At times, we want to be in complete control, yet God always sees the bigger picture.*

Below is a link to the entire Apostolic Letter. Read more to learn what Joseph teaches us about how God works through our fears and what about things that happen that we don't understand. In our life how do we get strength to accept life as it is? How can our lives be miraculously reborn? Pope Francis shares what the Apostle Paul and St. Augustine say about how faith gives meaning to every event? How do attitude and creative courage help us in our world today? How does what the Holy Family faced relate to so many today? We are called to find solutions. Our call to continue to love Jesus and his mother. Be reminded of "the value, the dignity and the joy of what it means to eat bread that is the fruit of one's own labour." And lastly, what is true love? Take a minute to read the wisdom from our Holy Father. Be open to conversion and growing in our faith. You won't be sorry.

http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_letters/documents/papa-francesco-lettera-ap_20201208_patris-corde.html

Let's pray to St. Joseph, Patron Saint of Families (and so much more)

*Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
To you God entrusted his only Son;
in you Mary placed her trust;
with you Christ became man.*

*Blessed Joseph, to us too,
show yourself a father
and guide us in the path of life.
Obtain for us grace, mercy and courage,
and defend us from every evil. Amen.*