

# PRAYERS IN THE PEW™ MONTHLY

## FAITH IN ACTION CALENDAR / HIGHLIGHTS

SATURDAY DEC 7	St. Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor
FRIDAY DEC 13	St. Lucy, Virgin
SUNDAY DEC 29	FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

*Faith Formation Companion to Prayers in the Pew™*

### → MONTHLY SYNOPSIS ←

December 2024 – As we walk through the journey of Advent into Christmas this month, we recall that Christ became a member of the human race when He was born into a family, the Holy Family. As challenging as it may be at times, family life is also our richest blessing, and when we consecrate our families to the Holy Family we will never be lacking in anything.

## THE PRAYER TO ST JOSEPH

During the liturgical year, Catholics express our devotion to both St. Joseph and the Blessed Virgin Mary with special feasts. But while Marian devotion is common, few Catholics are aware of how deeply the Church has held St. Joseph in veneration throughout the centuries.

The famous 16th Century saint, Teresa of Avila, said of St. Joseph: *"I wish I could persuade everyone to be devoted to this glorious saint... I have never known anyone to be truly devoted to him and render him particular services who did not notably advance in virtue, for he gives very real help to souls who commend themselves to him."*

St. Joseph is one of the few saints to have two feast days in the Church calendar. March 19th is the traditional feast of St. Joseph, and May 1st is the feast of St. Joseph the Worker, a more recent celebration honoring Joseph's patronage of all working men and women.

The ancient novena prayer to St. Joseph – said to date back to the very beginnings of Christianity – is one of the Church's greatest treasures. It emphasizes Joseph's protection and care for the Holy Family and his intercession for souls at the hour of death. He is the Church's model of what it means to be a father, provider, and spouse.

The following prayer can be prayed at any time and is particularly appropriate during the Advent and Christmas seasons:

## THE PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH

*O Saint Joseph, whose protection is so great, so strong, so prompt before the throne of God, I place in you all my interests and desires.*

*O Saint Joseph, do assist me by your powerful intercession, and obtain for me from your Divine Son all spiritual blessings, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, So that, having engaged here below your heavenly power, I may offer my thanksgiving and homage to the most Loving of Fathers.*

*O Saint Joseph, I never weary contemplating you and Jesus asleep in your arms; I dare not approach while He reposes near your heart. Press Him in my name and kiss his fine head for me and ask him to return the Kiss when I draw my dying breath.*

*Saint Joseph, Patron of departed souls – pray for me. (Mention your intention) Amen.*

## BIBLE BASICS



**Colossians 3:12-13** "Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if one has a grievance against another; as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do."

**Proverbs 22:6** "Train the young in the way they should go; even when old, they will not swerve from it."

## SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE

In the month of December let us challenge ourselves to make time for the family meal, particularly on Sundays. This challenge includes putting down phones and devices so that you can talk to each other uninhibited by noise and distractions. Try to live Advent in the spirit of Mary and Joseph as they prepare for the Child to come.



### Pope John Paul II's Teaching on St. Joseph

In 1989, on the Feast of the Assumption, Pope John Paul II issued an apostolic exhortation to all the Catholic faithful regarding the life and virtues of St. Joseph. The short, brilliant letter is entitled *Redemptoris Custos* ("Guardian of the Redeemer") and reminds the Church of the importance of Joseph for our spiritual and ecclesial lives.

The pope's letter especially highlights the most important aspect of his life; namely, that, together with the Blessed Virgin Mary, he was called by God to be the "guardian of the Redeemer". The six parts of the letter discuss everything we know and love about Joseph:

- Joseph in scripture
- Joseph's vocation
- A just man and a husband
- Joseph the worker
- The interior life of Joseph
- Patron of the Church

This beautiful letter can be easily found on the Vatican's website. Take time to read it during the Advent or Christmas season and nurture your love for the spouse of the Virgin Mary and the faithful guardian of Christ!

— THE SCHOOL OF SAINTS —



"A servant of Mary will have a tender devotion to St. Joseph, and by his pious homage of respect and love, will endeavor to merit the protection of this great saint."

~ *St. Madeleine Sophie Barat*

"If you want to bring happiness to the whole world, go home and love your family."

~ *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*

"God, to whom angels submit themselves and who principalities and powers obey, was subject to Mary; and not only to Mary but to Joseph also for Mary's sake. God obeyed a human creature; this is humility without precedent. A human creature commands God; it is sublime beyond measure."

~ *St. Bernard of Clairvaux*



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*Helping Catholics to Learn, Live, and Love their Faith.*



— CATECHISM CONNECTION —



**1653**— Parents are the principal and first educators of their children. In this sense the fundamental task of marriage and family is to be at the service of life.

**1657** — The home is the first school of Christian life and "a school for human enrichment." Here one learns endurance and the joy of work, fraternal love, generous—even repeated—forgiveness, and above all divine worship in prayer and the offering of one's life.

### CALENDAR OF FAITH | December

DEC 3	St. Francis Xavier, Priest
DEC 4	St. John Damascene, Priest and Doctor
DEC 7	St. Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor
DEC 8	SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF MARY
DEC 9	St. Juan Diego, Confessor
DEC 11	St. Damasus I, Pope
DEC 12	Our Lady of Guadalupe
DEC 13	St. Lucy, Virgin
DEC 14	St. John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor
DEC 21	St. Peter Canisius, Priest and Doctor
DEC 23	St. John Cantius, Priest
DEC 24	VIGIL OF CHRISTMAS
DEC 25	CHRISTMAS DAY
DEC 26	St. Stephen, First Martyr
DEC 28	Holy Innocents, Martyrs
DEC 29	St. Thomas Becket, Bishop and Martyr
DEC 29	FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY
DEC 31	St. Sylvester, Pope