

“I am Joseph! Come closer to me!”



“God has sent me here before you to make sure that your race would survive in the land, and to save your lives, many lives at that. So it was not you who sent me here, but God and He has made me father to Pharaoh, Lord of all His household and Administrator of the whole land of Egypt.”

Genesis 45:3-8

The Two Conditions for the Gift of the Holy Spirit

“God imposed two conditions for the coming of His Son, and consequently for the absolutely Unique Gift linked with this Coming – the Gift of the Holy Spirit: Joseph and Mary, two human beings, perfectly humble, simple, brave, defenceless and, nevertheless, endowed with a strength and a kind of superiority so indisputable that “The Image of the Invisible God, the First Born of all Creation” (Col 1:15), chose to be subject to them.

Mary is the One in whom the Holy Spirit makes the Body of Christ come, a fact which, with time, assumes the proportions of the Church in the midst of humanity.



Joseph is the One in whom the Father conceals Himself to welcome this Child and, in turn, to hide It, to surround It with love, to protect It, to help It increase in every way. ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the Power of the Most High will overshadow you.’ The angel said. Joseph is the Father’s ‘Shadow’. He is directly foreshadowed by this biblical ‘cloud’ - an exact prolongation of the fourth patriarch. (Luke 1:35) As in the case of the ‘cloud’, it is striking to see that these mortal enemies, whom St Paul calls ‘cosmic powers’, our true enemies, he says (Ephesians 6:12), can do absolutely nothing against this fragile Infant, so avidly spied upon by misunderstanding and hostility.

At twelve, upon one word spoken by His Mother, a word he does not immediately understand, Jesus must identify ‘to be with His Father’ – His most cherished wish – with ‘to be with Joseph’. And He disappears in this ‘Shadow’ where, surprisingly, He will grow in stature and in strength for a period of eighteen years. I cannot help but think that such a Mystery, this long and profound formation, would have lasting effects on the entire life of Jesus, as well as on the Life of the Church of all ages.”

“Discovering Saint Joseph” by Father Andrew Doze, Lourdes, France

Introduction

The purpose of this booklet is to encourage true devotion to Saint Joseph, Virgin Spouse of Mary and father to Jesus, for the restoration of a holy and virgin fatherhood upon the earth - a fatherhood that reflects the Compassion of the Eternal Father Who, *loved the world so much that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not be lost but may have Eternal Life.* (John 3:16) In Abba Joseph we seek to resurrect a virgin fatherhood in the priests of the Church, a Paternity that generates life through a virgin heart consecrated to The Immaculate Conception.

The Third Millennium is The Time of Saint Joseph

Proclaimed and affirmed by word and deed by our last four holy Popes, and the Josephian prophets - none greater than our dear Pope Saint John Paul II to whom this book is dedicated.



“Loving is Perfection, and living with the Love the Father has for the Son, that is, through the Holy Spirit - this is the most sublime Perfection.”

Jesus to the Servant of God, Conchita Cabrera di Armida - Mexican Mystic

“Joseph – The Entire Heritage”



“May Saint Joseph become for all of us an exceptional teacher in the service of Christ’s Saving Mission – a Mission which is the responsibility of each and every member of the Church: husbands and wives, parents, those who live by the work of their hands or by any other kind of work, those called to the apostolate ... it is my heartfelt wish, that these reflections on the person of Saint Joseph will renew in us the prayerful devotion which my predecessor

(Pope Leo XIII) called for a century ago. Our prayers and the very person of Saint Joseph have renewed significance for the Church in our day in light of the third millennium ... This just man, who bore within himself the entire heritage of the Old Covenant, was also brought into the “beginning” of the New and Eternal Covenant in Jesus Christ. May he show us the paths of this saving Covenant as we stand at the threshold of the next (third) millennium, in which there must be a continuation and further development of the “fullness of time” that belongs to the ineffable Mystery of the Incarnation of the Word. May Saint Joseph obtain for the Church and for the world, as well as for each of us the Blessing of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Amen.”

(Apostolic Letter “Redemptoris Custos” John Paul II – 15 August, 1989)

That the entire heritage of both Old and New Testament Covenants can be seen as coming through Saint Joseph is the choice of The Holy Spirit in the First Chapter of Saint Matthew's Gospel for the First Mass of Christmas Day, wherein the genealogy of *Christ, Son of David, Son of Abraham* are described, in three groups of 14, listed from Abraham to Saint Joseph. Once again the Holy Spirit is saying the generational blessing comes to us through the patriarch of God's choosing – Joseph being the most excellent.

Joseph – Hiding Place of God

*“You are my hiding place, you fill my heart with
songs of deliverance. Whenever I'm afraid
I will call on you”*

Psalm 32:7

When Joseph was on earth and appointed by God, the Eternal Father, to be His Vicar, Joseph humbly said “Fiat” to the most responsible vocation for a man on earth – to father the God/Man, Jesus, and to espouse The Immaculate Conception, Mary. He did it with such humility that one hardly even notices what he does, and when certain souls try to draw attention to him, he has a unique ability to hide himself and draw attention only to His Two Greatest Loves, Jesus and Mary. Were it not the appointed time Joseph would be prepared to remain in the shadows, but the words of our holy father, Pope John Paul II above, reveal that now is the hour – prayed for so long ago by one of Saint Joseph's children.

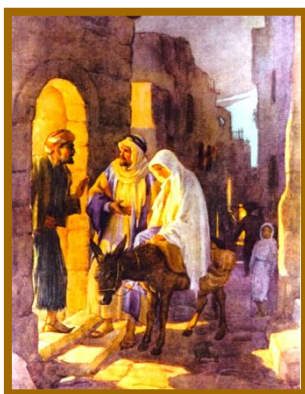
*Beautiful Sun, Father of the Day, hasten your
course, quickly bring this happy hour into its Day,
during which all the oracles of the saints must be
fulfilled, who promise us that, as we near the end
of time, the Glories of Saint Joseph will be
magnificently displayed: who assure us that God
Himself will draw the curtain and tear the veil that,
until now, has kept us from seeing, out in the open,*

the wonders of the sanctuary of Saint Joseph's soul: who predict that the Holy Spirit will constantly operate in the hearts of the faithful to move them to exalt the glory of this divine person.

(A 17th century Jesuit - P Jacquinot, *Les Glories de Joseph*, Dijon, 1645)

Joseph knocks on doors to find room for Jesus and Mary

This is a reflection upon he who hides so well one has to search hard to find him; he who is so silent only the quietest spirits can detect his presence, he who is so chaste only the pure of heart can see him and he who is so just only those prepared to face the truth about themselves can meet him.



If Joseph had his way, he would not exist at all in order that the Three Divine Persons and The Immaculate Conception exist fully in every human heart. Joseph is the humblest of men and therefore the greatest in sanctity of all men created by God. *He who is least is the greatest.* He is so humble Jesus desired his fatherhood as the shelter for His Poverty. He is so chaste the Immaculate Conception and the Pure

One could live intimately with him without disturbance. He is so just that the Integrity of the God/Man and His Mother, the Seat of Wisdom could live without fear within his walls. (*"Holiness will distinguish your house, Yahweh, forever and ever."* Psalm 93) The garden of his soul is so holy that It's perfume seduced the King of Queen of Heaven to It and in It held Their heavenly discourses, without fear of disclosure. Both Joseph and Mary knew how to keep the secret of their Divine King. But oh what pain it cost them to wait and wait for His Revelation to fill the earth.

Only Joseph's kind of meekness could endure the humiliations of every door closing in his face and still remain in peace. Though his 'brothers' saw the pregnancy of his holy spouse Mary, their hearts were so hard, their distractions so busy, they refused Her shelter. Their interior ears were not listening for the knock of the Messiah on their door. Joseph, nonetheless, went on seeking, knocking and asking for a little space for the birth of Jesus. Down the generations and particularly in our own time his knocking, seeking, asking is becoming louder as the world faces the global demise of a holy fatherhood, a fatherhood that God desires to shelter women and children from the perverse aspects of various cultures and ideologies that simply use men, women and children for their own ends. The Bethlehem of closed doors he once wandered through is now the Bethlehem of hardened hearts, shutting out the Divine Mother and the Savior Who She seeks to give birth to in us. Bethlehem, meaning "house of bread" was meant to open to the Bread of Life, just as our hearts and souls are meant to open to Him. Our churches, wherein the "Bread of Life" is enclosed - even there, Jesus and Mary are being shut out. Joseph weeps as his namesake of Old, to see the hardness of hearts of his brothers, who for not recognizing him cannot access the Gift God is offering to them. However he continues to call out like his Son,

"Ephphatha – open up!" (Mark 7:31-37)
*"The hour is late, repent for the Kingdom
of God is at hand."*

*"I will not enter the house where I live nor go to the bed
where I rest - I will give no sleep to my eyes, to my
eyelids will I give no slumber till I find a place for the
Lord - a dwelling for the Strong One of Jacob."*

Psalm 131

Joseph – Shadow of the Father

"The divine shadow (of the father) is a living one and is demanding. It does not exempt from effort, trials, necessary privation, paternal discipline, which is often harsh. It has the exigencies of a love, which is true, humble, perfectly gentle at times, but perfectly rigorous at others. This 'shadow' confers none of the automatic superiorities one seeks in magic, in superstitions, in the ordinary 'religious' bereft of faith. Who has been more tried than Joseph himself?"

"Discovering Saint Joseph" – Father Andrew Doze
French theologian – chaplain at the Shrine of Lourdes, France.

From dawn to the dusk of every day the sun, in it's arcing of the sky, creates light, while the forms of the earth cast shadows depending where they stand in relation to the sun. The shadows are longer and more noticeable the further away from the noonday sun they are, for at high noon the shadows disappear, the sun reaching the apex of its arc and the fullness of it's blaze. The high noon of God shone upon the earth in Jesus, Who is the center and apex of all Time and History. Joseph, the shadow of the Father had to 'disappear', that is be hidden, unnoticed or ignored among men, in order for the eyes of men to more readily see the 'Son-Light' - the Face of Christ which radiates the Countenance of the Eternal Father. Even the fullness of Grace of Our Blessed Mother, Mary, was obscured at that time – for it was the "Hour" of Christ alone – an hour awaited for centuries. Whenever Jesus was thought of in respect of his parents, disbelief entered hearts, *"Isn't this the son of Mary?"* - *"Isn't this the son of Joseph?"* – said in a most disparaging way, indicating the common opinion of Joseph of Mary as being the unlikely, if not impossible parents of the Christ. Not only his parents, but the town He grew up in, Nazareth was thought of disparagingly, *"Could anything good come out of Nazareth?"* Jesus said to his apostles He could work no miracles in the face of this disbelief and moved on to other places. It was surprisingly amongst His

own relatives this disbelief was entrenched. In all this the Eternal Wisdom shows His plan of Redemption as one outside of the common expectancies of humanity and that *“a prophet is not recognized in his own household.”* He reveals that His Seed of Infinite Fertility sprouts however, from the fertile ground of Mary and Joseph, whose humility and simplicity have never and may never be fully understood, much less emulated – so hidden, silent and in shadow they are. However, as Pope John Paul II states the hour has come, the third millennium, when this ‘shadow’ of the Divine Paternity is to emerge into the full sunlight of His Will for Revelation. Preceding the Second Coming of the Christ the 17th century prophecy of Saint Isidore of Isolanus will be fulfilled,

*“The victory bell will sound when the faithful recognize
the sanctity of Saint Joseph”*

The glories of Saint Joseph must come out of the shadows in order to establish in the world a divine fatherhood that will *“rebuild the crumbling ruins”* (Isaiah 61:4) of our homes, our fraternities, our sororities and nations. This has to happen in order for the Kingdom to come on earth as in Heaven. For without chaste and just headship of homes, communities and nations there can be no unity at all in the Divine Will. The one chosen to be the channel of entry of this Divine Paternity into the world is Saint Joseph from within His Virginal Nuptial Fiat with Mary, The Immaculate Conception – Her Fourth Virginal Nuptial Fiat. This is to fulfil the prophecy of Malachi 4:4, which says,

*“Know that I am going to send you Elijah the prophet
before My Day comes, that great and terrible Day.
He shall turn the hearts of fathers towards their children
and the hearts of children towards their fathers,
lest I come and strike the land with a curse.”*

Malachi 4:4

While Jesus identified the re-emergence of the Spirit of Elijah in the great prophet Saint John the Baptist, the fullness of this text is only completely understood in the light of the Divine Plan for bringing to completion Jesus’ last prayer before He died, *“May*

they be so completely One in Us Father as I am in You and You are in Me.” – in other words a Divine Paternity and Sonship investing the earth fully and without exception. Joseph, being the first creature to receive the Essence of this Divine Paternity, through the intercession of The Immaculate Conception, is the conduit for It into the world. The Essence of It is the Will of the Eternal Father, the embodiment of It is Jesus and Its Volition and Communion is The Holy Spirit.

Unity of Will in the Trinity

To have seen Me is to have seen the Father (John 14:9) and
It is the Father living in Me Who is doing this Work (John 14:10)

*But, the Advocate, the Holy Spirit,
Who the Father will send in My name
will teach you everything and remind you
of all I have said to you – When the Advocate comes,
whom I shall send to you from the Father – the Spirit of Truth
Who issues from the Father, He will be My witness.*

(Jn 14:26 and 15:26)

The Church has foreseen the coming of this Day of the fullness of revelation concerning the Holy Family as *“the perfect communion of persons”*. (John Paul II’s Theology of the Body) Indeed as early as the Council of Constance, She ratified the opinions of the great doctors and saints of the Church saying, the Order of the Hypostatic Union (The Holy Family) is the highest Order in Creation whether angelic or human and cannot be superseded. Joseph was the father of this Order even though Jesus was It’s Head, Essence, Founder and Perfection. (“The Life and Glories of Saint Joseph" by Edward Healy Thompson M.A.,) which includes also the following,

“Benedict XIV, who, almost two centuries ago, wrote thus of Saint Joseph: *“He, as constituted head of the Family immediately belonging to the service of a God-Man, transcends in dignity all the other saints; wherefore, he is happily established in an Order which is superior to all the other Orders in the Church.”* ...

What, then shall we say of Joseph, who placed in the Order of the Hypostatic Union, was destined by God, not only to be the first in His court and the closest in His confidence, but even to be the reputed father of the King of kings, to be not only the confidential friend, but the very spouse of the most exalted of all the empresses in the Universe? Next to the Divine Maternity, no honour in the world is comparable with this. To be comprised in the Order of the Hypostatic Union implies being, after Jesus and Mary, superior to all the other saints, both of the Old and the New Testament; and, the reason is clear: for, this Order being superior to all the other orders in the Church, it follows that, whosoever has a place in this Order, albeit in its lowest grade, as Joseph has, ranks before all who are of the apostles, which is the most eminent among them. It follows that Joseph is superior, not in nature, but in dignity, to the angels themselves, since the orders of angels are subject to the Order of the Hypostatic Union, subject to Jesus, their King and their Head, subject to Mary, their Queen.”

Joseph foreshadowed in the Old Testament

THE THREE ARKS OF GOD’S MERCY

‘Shadows’ of Joseph abound in the Old Testament, as do sacred scriptures that reveal his spirit and nature. Even as our holy Mother is revealed in many books of the Old Testament – Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, The Song of Songs, Esther, etc, so too Joseph. *“For those who search, will find.”* Jesus promises. For now we will look at the Three Arks of God and their custodians in order to see how the first two Arks foreshadow the third and Sublime Ark of Flesh, Mary, in whom was housed The True Testimony of the Eternal Father, Jesus.

In various times of our human history, when we have become steeped in selfishness and violence, Abba, our dear Father in Heaven has provided a Way back to Him, a Way to restore our ruined houses, a Vessel to carry us from the slavery of sin into a

new covenant of Love with Him. Three times this vessel has been an Ark - the Ark of Noah, made of wood, the Ark of Moses made of wood, gold and precious materials of all kinds, and the third Ark of Flesh, a divinely created Body infused with an Immaculate Soul, Mary, was built by God Himself and placed under the guardianship of Saint Joseph.

Our Beloved Mother, of course, is much more than just a Vessel of Safety and Deliverance and therefore, the one chosen to guard and shelter Her is much more than a guardian. Yet, in contemplating the reason for the building of the first two Arks of God's Mercy we come to a greater understanding of the Great Mystery of why entering the Ark of Mary, through our consecration to Her in Her scapular is so important for salvation. Joseph is of course the first creature to fully consecrate himself to Her and the servant par excellence of Her Mission to incarnate Christ and His Kingdom into the world. Let us consider then God's commands to Noah and Moses, the patriarchs chosen to bring the remnant of God's people to a New Land and the custodians of the first two Arks of God. In Genesis 6 and Exodus 25 the Word of God says,

Noah's Ark: *Yahweh saw the wickedness of Man was great on the earth and His Heart grieved. "I regret having made them." But, Noah found favour with Yahweh. God said to Noah, "The end has come for all things of flesh. Make yourself an Ark of resinous wood. Make it with reeds and line it with pitch. Make a roof for the Ark. Put the door of the Ark high up in the side and make a first, second and third deck. I will establish My Covenant with you. You must board the Ark – you and your household."*

God is going to destroy all flesh except the few chosen as worthy of survival. Noah, His chosen patriarch is subject to years of ridicule and humiliations of all kinds while setting out the build the Ark of God – a vessel to sail on the turbulent seas of the Great Flood. How much trepidation must Noah have felt, that he build this Ark well, since it must survive extreme conditions never before known in the history of the world. How humble a man must he have been to endure the endless questioning and ridicule

that always accompanies human logic in minds disordered by sin? We can imagine his great humility. But Holy Scripture says, when because of the murderous malice of Cain, *the earth was drowned, it was Wisdom again who saved it.* (Wisdom 10:4) *Noah was found perfectly virtuous - in the time of wrath, he became the scion: because of him a remnant was preserved for the earth at the coming of the Flood. Everlasting covenants were made with him, that never again should every living creature perish by flood.* (Ecclesiasticus 44:17)

This Ark had a door high up in the side for entry, and three decks. If we compare this Ark of Wood with Mary the Ark of Flesh we can see that in Mary the place of entry into Her is Her Immaculate Heart which is *“high up in the side”* – the side of Christ, from which all the everlasting Graces for Redemption flowed on the Cross and which Her Immaculate Heart received as in a Vessel of Divine Nurture for the Church.

We also see that there are *“three decks”* – the symbol of the *three hypostases of God*, the most Holy Trinity, spoken of in the prophecy of Saint Nilus, 5th century hermit/priest of some renown for his great wisdom.

Saint Nilus said that *“towards the middle of the 20th century – the impious one will so completely science with vanity that it will go off the right path and lead people to lose faith in the existence of God in three hypostases.”* The ‘three decks’ in which these three hypostases rest are incarnate in the Order of the Hypostatic Union in Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

This is a great mystery which the Church tried to explain at the Council of Constance including astounding references to Saint Joseph. It is in the third millennium however, that the Church is called, through the evocation of Her great popes, to expound this even more fully. May the Holy Spirit raise up those saints and theologians who will do so, so that the people swaying on the decks of the New Ark of God may be saved from the flood of impurity and impiety that is seeking to engulf the earth.

Moses' Ark: *Build me a Sanctuary, so that I may dwell among them. In making the Tabernacle and its furnishings, you must follow exactly the pattern I will show you. You are to make me an Ark of acacia wood. You are to plate it inside and out with pure gold. Inside the Ark, you will place the Testimony I shall give you. Further, you are to make a Throne of Mercy of pure gold. You must place the Throne of Mercy on top of the Ark. Inside the Ark you must place the Testimony I will give you. There I shall come to meet you. There from above the Throne of Mercy, from between the two cherubs that are on the Ark of the Testimony, I shall give you all the commands for the children of Israel.*

Both these scriptures contain symbolic references to the Holy Family in which the True Testimony of God, Jesus, gifted Himself, vulnerable and little, into the care of Mary and Joseph. Jesus was indeed the first to enter the Ark of Flesh, Mary, by entering Her Pure Womb, and taking His Humanity from Her Pure Flesh and Blood. In Him all humanity and indeed all creation exists and is conceived with Him in The Immaculate Conception, Who thereafter in Him brings us to birth to a new life of holiness and Joy. By our consecration to Her, in His Spirit of littleness and docility, like Joseph, we procure what Jesus has already done for us in Her – we accept the Gift of Her Divine Maternity over us. Joseph entered Her by his three powerful Nuptial Fiats with Her in imitation of his Saviour, and thereby is firstborn of The Holy Union of God the Son with His Mother – even as Joseph of Old was the Jacob's firstborn of Rachel's body.

While Noah's family were the first and only ones destined worthy by God to enter the Ark he built, Jesus' family are the first and only ones who can enter the Ark of Mary, built by God Himself. Jesus' true family are all those who enter the Kingdom of His Divine Will, for He says in the Gospel those who are His true mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters are those who live the Father's Will. These are the pure of heart reborn in Mary, the Immaculate Conception for as Wisdom 7:26 says,

*She is a Breath of the Power of God
Pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty
Hence, nothing impure can find its way into Her
A reflection of the Eternal Light
Untarnished Mirror of God's Active Power
Image of His Goodness*

There is so much more in the symbolism of the Arks of Noah and Moses that a separate book would be required. Mostly this symbolism is in the Ark of Moses wherein we see Joseph as the 'veil', which covered the Tabernacle and hid the 'tent of meeting between God and man' from the curiosity of profane eyes and profane dispositions. Joseph is also the 'sanctuary lamp' that burns in perpetual adoration before the beauties of the Incarnation Mystery ever before him. He is the custodian of the Ark of Mary, Who is the Throne upon which the Mercy of God rests and dispenses His Graces. A thorough reading of Genesis opens up so many beauties concerning these revelations about the Order of the Hypostatic Union – revelations that were not as distinctly portrayed in the New Testament.

The Word of God Itself is a 'veil' covering many mysteries. But as a groom lifts the veil covering his bride's face to reveal her beauty, so Joseph, the chaste spouse of Mary, lifts the 'veil' covering the Face of Mary, the Immaculate Conception – that we may discover the Beauty of Our Mother. When and how does he lift that 'veil' – when we consecrate our lives to him, as Jesus and Mary did. This is the purpose of his scapular given to us by the Church on the threshold of the 20th century. Why did the Holy Spirit decide it was at this time in history that consecration to Joseph was most needed. Because this is the time as Our Lady of Fatima said, that a deluge of impurity was flooding the earth – and more souls would go to hell for sins of the flesh than for any other sin. Who better then to protect us from the great fall from grace of such sins than the Chaste Heart of Abba Joseph, the only man found worthy to marry The Immaculate Conception.

At a time when homosexuality and other sexual perversities are rampant and Aids is a pandemic so great, the world press is afraid to even speak of it; at a time when the abuse of children is at its highest level known, even to legitimising experimentation on the unprotected embryos, which are fertilized and harvested for that very purpose – yes, at this time when life at its very conception is the most threatened of species – but more concern is shown to all the other species that are threatened – this is the very hour that God has chosen to raise up the great protector of Life, the guardian of Jesus and Mary, the guardian of Their Mystical Body – he will from his heavenly glory come, if we ask him, to protect children and protect the Divine Innocence that is their special attribute.

But the place where his Spirit will be released most effectively is in the Eucharistic Canon – a desire of Pope John XXIII. However when Pope John XXIII effected this as the first act of Vatican Council II, there was only one Eucharistic Prayer – and now with the many Eucharistic Prayers which are preferred to this one, his name is hardly ever mentioned. In his most beautiful vocation as ‘alter Christus’ the priest at Mass in invoking the name of the Chaste Spouse of Mary, beside Her, releases the nectars of their Virginal Nuptial Union, a Union Popes Paul VI and John Paul II said “is the source from whence all holiness floods the earth”.

“Redemptoris Custos” Pope Saint John Paul II, para 7

This flood of Purity is what we need to deny the flood of impurity its reign. In invoking the holy names of Mary and Joseph to honour their Virginal Maternity and Paternity over Jesus we effect all that this parentage implies – the Incarnation of Christ. May the Church do so very soon, that Christ may find His birth in us all.

Obedience to Joseph Necessary for our Salvation

If the Saviour (Salvation Himself) was obedient to Saint Joseph as Abba, then our Salvation depends on this also. In other words it is not extraneous or just peculiar to Jesus' earthly life – it is fundamental simply because Jesus is the fulfilment of the whole Promise and every Act He did is an essential reparation for our unfulfilled acts. Since paying homage to one's father is one of the most essential acts of the human person and receiving homage from one's father is one of the most essential prerequisites for becoming a fully human person, Jesus had to do that in a divine manner that repaired for all our lack.

And in so doing He repaired all the wounds of souls bereft of sound fathering. Joseph's unique vocation was to offer Jesus the kind of fathering that is so lacking in humanity from Adam to the last man AND because Jesus does not experience this fathering in His inhabitation of every child, He accepts through Joseph recompense for this grief. This recompense He holds within Himself to be gifted to all who suffer from this lack of fathering. But one must turn to Joseph, as Jesus did, in order to receive It.

There are many layers of meaning, which are opened up to us through prayerful reflection on the Old Testament texts. This 'treasure hidden in the field' of Holy Scripture is worth searching for, since it reveals so much to us about our Beloved Jesus and His parents, albeit in metaphor and symbol. All that the Holy Spirit does and says in the Old Testament is a carefully woven tapestry, whose patterns symbolize many divine mysteries for the lover of the Word.

I Myself will send an angel before you to guard you as you go and to bring you to the place that I have prepared. Give him reverence and listen to all that he says. Offer him no defiance. He would not pardon such a fault for My Name is in him. If you listen carefully to his voice and do all that I say, I shall be enemy to your enemies, foe to your foes.

Exodus 23:20

The Angel who guarded the new Paradise of God's Indwelling is Joseph. His name means, "*to prune what is sterile in order to generate new life*". (Genesis 30:22) Jesus tells us the name of His Father in John 15 when He says, "*I am the true Vine and my Father is the Vinedresser. Every branch in me that bears no fruit, he cuts away, and every branch that does bear fruit He prunes. You are pruned already by means of the Word that I have spoken to you*".

In Genesis the Word of God says that this is the meaning of the name "Joseph". Therefore we know that "Joseph" is the name and nature of the Eternal Father.

Reaching the Promised Land Relies on Obedience to God's Patriarch

The Ark of Noah carried those to be saved - the Ark of Moses was carried by those to be saved. To be saved one needed to be obedient to the Ark's custodian - the patriarch who is the depository of the Promise. Those who were disobedient died in their rebellion. Jesus and Mary's obedience to Joseph here is the sign for our Salvation. Their very lives were saved by obedience to Joseph, who himself obeyed his angel swiftly. What profundity is in this Mystery of God and The Immaculate Conception being subject to their child, Joseph? What will They not do for the one who saved Them from death - so that They in turn could save us all from Eternal Death? Being generous and grateful in a Divine Magnitude, Jesus and Mary will refuse nothing to Abba Joseph for his continuous interior martyrdom for Their sake. That is why prayers to him are so swiftly answered.

These Scripture stories are clear. Reaching the Promised Land relies on obedience to God's Patriarch. Those who ridiculed Noah and turned away from boarding his Ark were lost in the Great Flood. Those who disobeyed Moses suffered manifold punishment, death and refused entry to the Promised Land. Moses himself was not permitted to enter the Promised Land because of a brief hesitation in fulfilling God's command. Obedience to the Divine Will is a constant requirement for

reception of the Gift. Jesus and Mary saw in Joseph, God's manifest Will. God's favour rested on his people through obedience to the Patriarch he had chosen. Disobedience to the Patriarch was seen as disobedience to God Himself. The docility of Mary and Jesus to Saint Joseph implies the same injunction of God to the Christian Era – Obey my father Joseph and all will be well. This is echoed in the story of Joseph in the Book of Genesis, *“Go to Joseph and do everything he tells you.”* (Genesis 41:55). This story of Joseph of Old is so deeply connected with the story of Joseph of Jesus that it deserves a whole meditation in itself. For now, we concentrate on the Arks of Mercy and their Patriarchs.

“If any man among you is a prophet I make Myself known to him in a vision, I speak to him in a dream. Not so with my servant Moses. He is at home in My House. I speak with him face to face, plainly and not in riddles and he sees the form of Yahweh. How then have you dared to speak against my servant Moses?”

(Numbers 12:4)

How much more do these words apply to Saint Joseph. Truly he was at home in God's House – His Holy Will. Truly God spoke with him face to face, much more so than with Moses. The punishment given to Miriam and Aaron for speaking against Moses was dreadful – Miriam struck with leprosy. How much more will those be punished who speak against Joseph, the Virgin Father of God – or even moreso against Holy Mother and Jesus. O may we be careful not to speak against God's chosen ones.

The Pope – Patriarch of the Church

In this reflection we begin to see that the Church Herself of which Mary is the embodiment, has Her own Patriarch, the Pope, and obedience to him is the sure way of reaching the Promised Land of our Redemption and Sanctification. As Mary is the embodiment of the Church, the Ark of our Salvation, and Jesus, Her Head then Joseph has to be the prefigurement of all the succeeding Popes, who are placed over the Church for Her

protection. Pope John Paul II was the perfect example of this Josephian trait of imaging the Father's Love, reconciling families and bringing all to honour the Eternal Father.

His life, like Joseph of Old and Jesus' Life, was maliciously sought among his own brothers, the priests who envied his wisdom and popularity and thought he was retrograde. Despite all the opposition against him, he demonstrated a magnanimous love, a generous forgiveness and an untiring Mission of teaching the truths of the Gospel. Jesus, Mary and Joseph were the three Stars of his pontificate, as his writings bear witness to. The fact his middle name is Joseph is no accident of fate. A mark of his pontificate is clearly seen as a reconciler – even with those who have been enemies of the Church for generations. His Faith in the Power of Christ to reconcile was truly of divine origin. The story of Joseph of Genesis (see further on) could easily be a reading of his life, for the papal Office is second only to the throne of the Divine King – even as Joseph of Old rode in a chariot second only to Pharaoh.

Entering the Ark has Specific instructions from God

To enter the Arks of Noah and Moses there were specific instructions given by God - so too the Ark of Mary. These instructions are implicit in those given concerning the two earlier Arks. As spoken above, “the door high up in the side” of Noah's Ark now becomes the sword-pierced opening in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, high up in the side of His Body on the Cross. From this pierced opening flowed the deluge of Merciful Blood and Water that flooded into the Heart of Mary, the New Earth, for dispensation to all of Her children.

Even as those who entered Noah's Ark, through the door high up in the side, were saved from the ravages of the flood, the children of Mary are saved from the flood of impurity that has deluged the earth by sailing on Her Seas of Mercy and being grounded in Her perfect teachings.

In the case of the Ark of Mercy of Moses, God disposed certain signs when it was proper to enter the Tabernacle of the Lord in which the Ark of Mercy was housed, and His directions were detailed and clear concerning It.

Moses put the golden altar in the Tent of Meeting in front of the veil, and on it burnt fragrant incense as Yahweh had directed Moses. Then he put the screen at the entrance to the Tabernacle. He put the altar of holocaust at the entrance to the Tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting, and on It offered the holocaust and the oblation, as Yahweh had directed Moses. He put the basin between the Tent of Meeting and the altar, and filled it with water for the ablutions. This was for Aaron and his sons to wash their hands and feet. Whenever they entered the Tent of Meeting or approached the altar they washed, as Yahweh had directed Moses. Moses then set up the court round the Tabernacle and the Altar and placed the screen at the gateway to the court. Thus Moses completed the work. The cloud covered the Tent of Meeting and the Glory of Yahweh filled the Tabernacle. Moses could not enter the Tent of Meeting because of the Cloud that rested on it and because of the Glory of Yahweh that filled the tabernacle.

(Exodus 40:16-38)

We can see here the symbols of the Holy Family Life and also for our Eucharistic Life in the Church. If we see the Tent of Meeting of the New Covenant as Jesus coming down from Heaven to live in, meet and caress the Pure Humanity of Mary, and in Her all Creation; She then becomes the ‘golden altar’ upon which He lives out His Sacrificial Love. In Her Immaculate Heart, His Sacrificial Love finds the place in which each one of His Acts is returned to Him in like kind and with a fragrance altogether pleasing to the most Holy Trinity.

Every Act He did in Her was reciprocated in a way that gave perfect satisfaction for all the ingratitude of Mankind. Before one enters this ‘tent of meeting between God and Man’ one needs purification, and for that Jesus has provided us with the Sacraments of the Church, in which He, Himself, pours over us the purifying waters of His Love. The ‘screening veil’ for this most exalted Mystery of the Incarnation in Mary is of course our beloved Abba Joseph, whose contemplative silence becomes the ‘sanctuary lamp’ perpetually burning before this Tabernacle of Flesh, Mary. He is also, that mysterious ‘cloud’ that rested upon this Tabernacle, hovering over Her with protective love, screening Her from the profane eyes of the world and the ‘Glory of Yahweh that filled’ Her.

The Scapular of Carmel - the Way to enter the Ark of Mary

The Scapular of Carmel is clearly the specific way chosen by God and his Blessed Mother for our entry into the Ark of Mary. Since literally hundreds of times in the 20th century alone, She has indicated this, and it has been confirmed by all our great and most recent Popes, as The Sign of Her Immaculate Heart’s protection over us while on our pilgrimage home to Heaven – our Promised Land. Those who do not live It’s Spirit end up by removing it – but, those who persevere in wearing Her Mantle and praying in Her way and Spirit are enriched by the Power of Her Maternal Love. (In a book “Joseph’s Cloak and Mary’s Mantle” there is more detail on the efficacies of the Scapular Consecration.) Intrinsic to this Consecration in the Scapular is living It’s Spirit, which is the Way of all Carmelites – to contemplate continuously the Passion, Death and Suffering of Our Lord Jesus Christ and the Co-redemptive Suffering of His Beloved Mother.

In the Spirit of the “*new and divine holiness*”¹ we not only contemplate His Passion, but, pray to be enabled to enter into It with Him, living the Acts of His Interior Passion as well. This is what truly, “*entering the door high up in the side*” means. This is what living in the Ark of Mary means. This is the only true

Way of safety in this world full of deceptions and false ideologies – the Way of the Cross.

¹ (At the centenary of the Rogationist Fathers, the Order which St Annibale founded, the Holy Father John Paul II exhorted us to imitate St Annibale in a *'new and divine holiness with which the Holy Spirit wants to enrich Christians at the dawn of the third millennium'* so as to *'make Christ the Heart of the World'*. (John Paul II's Letter on the Centenary of the Rogationist Fathers', L'Osservatore Romano, July 9, 1997, p.3 - the more explicit details of this way of life are contained in the writings of the Servant of God, Luisa Piccarreta, of whom Saint Annibale was spiritual director)

Of course, one must mention here another way intrinsic to Carmelite Spirituality – consecration to Saint Joseph, for Joseph is the exemplar of life lived in, with and through Mary for the sake of Jesus. The Holy Spirit has indicated by introducing a scapular in his honour in the 19th century that, in this era, our consecration to Saint Joseph now has its own exigency and sacramental. This scapular symbolizes the Cloak of His Paternal Protection and we join it to the Mantle of Mary, the Scapular of Carmel, to symbolize Their Virginal Nuptial Unity for the sake of Christ's Incarnation in our souls. Those who seek and desire above all to incarnate Christ in their souls have particular devotion to the Scapular Consecration to Mary and Joseph. The Holy Spirit always introduces the pertinent spirituality for the Church at the time when it is most needed to counteract a particular error or state of sinfulness.

Jesus took His Human Life from the Blood and Flesh of Mary. His very first Act as Redeemer was to enter Her Womb, within the Virginal Nuptial Marriage of Mary and Joseph, and be nourished from Her Body. Interiorly He was nourished by Her Spirit, which was always in union with His Acts. They entered a Virginal Nuptial Fiat for the sake of the Mission of Redemption. This Mystery could be likened to the 'cloud' that hovered over the Tabernacle of Moses, which prevented him from entering it. Joseph also, was prevented from entering the 'Holy of holies' – the Sacred Place where the Acts of Jesus with Mary which, being interior, were hidden from the view of any man – so exalted were they.

The Divine Will in It's gratitude to Joseph's spousal fidelity to Mary and paternal fidelity to Jesus, however, revealed Himself through the facility of his contemplative soul. Mary truly lived Jesus command in John 15:4, "*Make your home in Me as I make Mine in You.*" Joseph in the Spirit of his paternal love did likewise – the three becoming One in the Mission of Redemption. Their home was more truly in Jesus than in a place called Nazareth, remembering also that They spent a significant number of years in Egypt as refugees from a violent regime.

*When peaceful silence lay over all and night had run
the half of her swift course, down from Heaven, from the
Royal Throne, leapt Your all powerful Word.* Wisdom 18:14

Yes, Jesus in his ardour leapt from Heaven into the Womb of Mary at midnight. He became in Her the Living Reality of the Father's Presence among mankind. All the Promises are Him and are in Him. He is the Promised Land - the Land of the Divine Will lived in, with and through Mary. He boarded the Ark of Mary to begin our Salvation and having boarded the Ark, He called It's Patriarch/captain, Joseph to sail it through the years of the Christian Era until His Second Coming. Like Pharaoh in Genesis, He entrusted the whole administration of His Kingdom (in Mary) to Joseph and gave Joseph a 'chariot' second only in importance to His own. No one was to *move hand or foot* in His Kingdom without the authority of Joseph.

*'Can we find any other man like this,
possessing the Spirit of God?' So Pharaoh
said to Joseph, 'Seeing that God has given
you knowledge of all this, there can be no
one as intelligent and wise as you. You shall
be my chancellor, and all my people shall
respect your orders – only this throne shall
set me above you.'* Genesis 41:38

Joseph - Reconciler of families

“Holiness will distinguish your House”

(Psalm 93 Verse 5)

The story of Joseph of Genesis continues with the wondrous designs of God being lived out in Joseph in placing him guard over the granaries of Egypt until a time of great famine occurred throughout the nations and all went to Joseph to be given food in their time of starvation. Joseph of Genesis was so wise he discerned the Plan of God in all the events of his life, preparing him for this momentous occasion. And he said, (Genesis 45:9)

Come Closer to Me

“Come closer to me’. And when they had come closer to him he said, ‘I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. But now, do not grieve, do not reproach yourselves for having sold me here, since God sent me before you to preserve your lives ... God sent me here to make sure your race would have survivors in the land and to save your lives, many lives at that.

So it was not you who sent me here but God, and he has made me father to Pharaoh, lord of all his household and administrator of the whole land of Egypt ... I will provide for you there (in Goshen) for there are still to be five years of famine and I do not want you to be in need, you and your household and all you have ... then throwing his arms round the neck of his brother Benjamin he wept, and Benjamin wept on his shoulder. He kissed all his brothers, weeping over them. After which his brothers talked with him.

Notice it is only when they came closer to him, he revealed himself to them. Notice as well it is he who orchestrates the reconciliation. When the Church herself comes closer to Joseph and recognizes that he is the custodian of the treasures of Her Kingdom, only then will God’s Plan for full reconciliation of His

people with Himself be possible. For in this story it is clear Joseph is not the King (Pharaoh), but the King has given him the full power of dispensation of all the treasures of his kingdom, because of the nobility of his spirit and his trustworthiness. So too our Joseph! It is clear that God the Father chose Joseph to be the custodian of His greatest Treasures, Jesus and Mary. That in itself signifies his worth in God's eyes. Even Jesus and Mary did not move hand or foot unless Joseph instructed. The Old Testament story is replete with revelations concerning Joseph of the New Covenant who is always silent.

Entry into the Holy House of Nazareth and all its treasures comes by way of honouring Saint Joseph, the father of this household. For he is the custodian of the Bread of Life, Jesus, and is now the one we must go to in order to find relief in our time of Eucharistic famine – a famine of priestly vocations – a famine of holy patriarchs who will “feed Jesus’ lambs and feed Jesus’ sheep”. Access to the Ark of Mercy, Mary and the Bread of Life, Jesus, is through Their Custodian, Joseph. Without giving him honour, he cannot release the fecundity of his office, which is to virginally generate Christ in souls – which is the office of Jesus’ priesthood.

This reality too is revealed in the story of Joseph of Genesis. Until Joseph's brothers, who had sold him into slavery, recognized him and gave him honour, they could not receive the gifts he desired to give them from the power of his office. A thorough reading of this story will reveal this. For in this recognition was the humility and contrition that was required of God to forgive them for their treachery. Then and only then was the whole family of Jacob and his sons reunited. In this story the drama is played out between Joseph and his brothers – their father Jacob only being brought in at the end. The lesson is here that the father's happiness depends on his children forgiving their crimes against one another in a mature way – not needing to be forced to do so through their father's authority.

It is also a powerful lesson that wise people know, even as Joseph knew, that even in the so called ‘evil’ that befell him he saw the hand of God and the mystery of His designs – betrayal, being

thrown down a well and left for dead, sold as a slave, imprisonment in a foreign country, tempted by his master's wife to commit adultery, imprisonment again etc. Another Joseph, Karol Joseph Wojtyla (Pope St John Paul II) experienced the same things and also had the same Wisdom to see in it all the designs of God and he too reached the highest office and through that office was able to bring reconciliation to his separated brothers and sisters.

“Go to Joseph and do as he tells you.” Genesis

Joseph – the Screening Veil

He (Moses) took the Testimony and placed It inside the Ark. He set the shafts to the Ark and placed the Throne of Mercy on It. He brought the Ark into the Tabernacle and put the screening veil in place. Thus, he screened the Ark of Yahweh.”

Exodus 40:20

Joseph's place in our Salvation story is more elucidated in the Old Testament than in the New – that is for those searching for the detail. There is a great deal of symbolism reflecting him in the story of the building of the Tabernacle for the Ark and the Tent of Meeting. Such detail is a full and rich tapestry where, once we see the Ark of the Testimony as Mary and Jesus as the Throne of Mercy, we can clearly see Joseph as ‘the screening veil’ that hid this Holy Place from the profane eyes of curious people.

We may also see him as the ‘sanctuary lamp’ that burns its perpetual flame outside the Holy of Holies signifying the Sacred Presence there. Surely that is what he was in the Life of the Holy Family. No one more than he was privy to the intimacies of the King and Queen of Heaven, nor for so long. This explains his pervasive silence. He is ‘the cloud’ of contemplation that covered this ‘tent of meeting between God and Man’. This ‘cloud’ may also be seen as the obscurity and simplicity of his life, which allowed no one to suspect the amazing event taking

place in his household. Joseph was so immersed in Sacred Scripture, like his holy Spouse, Mary that he would have realized the significance of these words being actualized in his own life.

At the entrance to the Tent of Meeting ... that is where I shall meet you and speak to you ... in the place consecrated to My Glory ... I will consecrate the Tent of Meeting and the Altar ... the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting and the Glory of Yahweh filled the Tabernacle. (Exodus 40:34)

Thus, in this simplicity of his occupation, his manner of living, his silence, his avoidance of worldly affairs, the Mystery of the Incarnation unfolding in his home was given Its ‘screening veil’, until the appointed time when Jesus was to make His revelation public. Exodus 36 says concerning the completion of the Tent of Meeting,

He made fifty gold clasps and with them drew the sheets together. In this way the Tabernacle was a unified whole.

So too, as the chapters (sheets) of Joseph’s life were drawn together with those of Mary and Jesus, they formed the ‘unified whole’ of the Trinity of Persons who reflected the Father, Son and Holy Spirit on earth. The ‘fifty gold clasps’ that held these ‘sheets’ together – that is the mysteries in the life of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, we may consider as those fifty ‘Hail Mary’s’ we say as we meditate on these Mysteries. All together this formed the Tabernacle of the God Man on earth where for 30 years He lived the humble life of a carpenter, the trade He learned from His father Joseph, and by which He learned to make those perfect ‘yokes’ that made plowing so easy. *For My Yoke is easy and My burden is light.* We might also imagine that it was indeed Saint Joseph who first prayed the Ave Maria, for, was it not he who first heard the story of the Annunciation from his Beloved? And being the Guardian of Her Life, would he not have repeated in his heart as often as his heartbeat the words of the Eternal Father to His Beloved – words which formed the Fiat of our Redemption.

How could we imagine differently? If Mary frequently prayed the Stations of the Cross after Jesus' Resurrection, why would Joseph not have repeatedly prayed the Mystery of the Incarnation, which brought to him the greatest Joy of his life – Jesus. And so we see Joseph reflected also in this beautiful text: Wisdom 8:2.

*She it was I loved and searched for from my youth.
I resolved to have Her for my Bride. I fell in love
with Her Beauty. Her closeness to God lends
luster to Her noble birth, since the Lord of all has
loved Her ... I, therefore, determined to take Her
to share my life, knowing She would be my
counselor in prosperity, my comfort in cares and
sorrow. Through Her I shall be acclaimed where
people gather ... they will wait on my silences and
pay attention when I speak ... by means of Her
immortality shall be mine ... when I go home I
shall take my ease with Her, for nothing is bitter in
her company. When life is shared with Her there
is no pain only gladness and joy.*

The Wedding Feast of the Lamb

This 'golden chain', the rosary of the Angelic Psalter, which is the Marriage proposal of the Holy Trinity to Mary, the Immaculate Conception, draws us, like Joseph, into the sublime Marriage Feast of the Lamb with all His Creation in Her, of which Joseph was the first joyful witness and over which He was appointed Husband/Guardian. For Joseph to be appointed Husband of The Immaculate Conception is to given the sublime vocation to 'husband' all Her immaculate conceptions – Her children sanctified in the Passion and Precious Blood of Jesus.

It is this Marriage Feast we are invited to enter - for "*the Spirit and the Bride say 'Come'.*" Rev 22:17 Those who come to the Wedding and fail to wear an appropriate garment insult the Bride and Bridegroom and Jesus says, with great solemnity, *'they will be bound hand and foot and thrown out into the dark, where there*

will be weeping and grinding of teeth - for many are called but few are chosen.’ Matt 22:1-14

How this awareness should compel us to be very attentive to our bodies and souls and how we live our lives, especially how we come to the great Wedding Feast of the Lamb, the Holy Eucharist. Are our souls clothed in His Virtues? Are we aware and attentive to the invisible Mysteries being enacted? Are we totally immersed in the Divine Will and Its Acts as they are being lived in that auspicious moment, re-enacting His Life from Conception to Ascension? Are we aware we are actually on Calvary with Mary at the Foot of the Cross adoring the Crucified Lord and afterwards participants in His Resurrection? If we are not aware of these things and more and are just bodily present at Mass as if we are at a memorial service, we are not properly clothed for the Wedding Feast of the Lamb of God. May we always ask our angels to keep us attentive to the Sacred Mysteries Jesus is reliving for us and in us in every Eucharist and every Consecrated Host. If the Holy Mass is to be our Sacrament of Unity, it must become for us a true Wedding of our souls to Jesus – it must become a Love Feast, as every moment with Him was for Mary and Joseph.

While Saint Joseph was not physically present for the first Eucharist of Jesus, which Mary was, and while he never received the Sacramental Presence of Jesus, he received so much more – the Real Presence, the Real Embraces, the Real Words spoken from Jesus own lips and with His own compassionate Voice, with tenderness beyond description. He worked beside Him every day. He was in awe of His Creator’s obedience to him and the tender way He called him, ‘Abba’. He watched Him collect, saw and form the wood that would one day make His Cross. He taught Him to make utensils for Mary and watched with Joy as He gave them to Her. He understood the deep mysteries being lived out and that the horrendous prophecies in Isaiah would be fulfilled in Him. With what Sorrow did not this father observe the tenderness of his Son, knowing from the beginning He would be the victim for our sins. How deeply and persevering he would have prayed for his Son to grow in “wisdom, stature, favour and

grace”, so that He could endure all that was to befall Him, when one day he would not be around to give Him encouragement and support. In what way did Joseph not participate in the Living Eucharist, daily? I cannot imagine another, other than Jesus and Mary, who could teach us more about how to participate in the Holy Eucharist. Did he not offer the Eternal Father his heart through which to Sorrow for His Beloved Son, eyes with which to weep for His Sufferings, a body with which to labour for His sustenance, arms with which to embrace Him tenderly when He needed comfort? The Eternal Father has immense gratitude to Saint Joseph for allowing Him a body in which to suffer the unique kind of Sorrow of fathering the King of Martyrs.

In the House of Joseph was the Home of the Living Eucharist – a Eucharist that began Its Sacrificial Life at Jesus’ Conception. The One Who called Joseph Abba for 30 years and saw in him the tender mercies of His Eternal Father would have had him and His Beloved Mother in mind above all, when He said these words in the Gospel of John.

Father ... I have given them the teaching You gave to Me ... I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given Me, because they belong to You. All I have is Yours and all You have is Mine and in them I am glorified.

Joseph – The Vinedresser

I am the True Vine and my Father is the Vinedresser. Every branch in Me that bears no fruit He cuts away and every branch that does bear fruit He prunes to make it bear even more.

What Jesus is describing here is the literal meaning of the name Joseph. Joseph is first mentioned in the Book of Genesis 30:22. The first child of Rachel’s body (not from her slave girl) to her husband Jacob brought such joy to Rachel she called him Joseph which means to ‘take away the shame of my sterility and increase or generate in me more children’. After being unable to bear

children for such a long time and having to give her slave girls to Jacob in order to bear legal children by him, Rachel was so filled with grief at seeing her sister Leah keep bearing children from him that she cried out to the Lord, “*Give me children or I will die*”. Barrenness was seen as a curse for the Jewish woman, natural fertility a sign of God’s blessing. But in Rachel’s case her grief was manifold for many reasons as a thorough reading of her story will tell. Then one day God heard her prayer and her joy was so great she called him Joseph, which means the one who “pruned away” her barrenness and “increased” her fruitfulness. This is exactly what Jesus says is the vocation of His Father in the Gospel of Saint John 15.

I am the True vine and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that bears no fruit He cuts away, and every branch that does bear fruit He prunes, to make it bear even more .

This pruning in order to make fruitful is the very meaning of the word Joseph as relayed in the Book of Genesis. It is the Life of Divine Generation. It is the very Nature of God the Father. So Joseph bears the Name of the Father’s Essence. In this is the great significance of his own vocation. And so, with these thoughts in mind we may believe that Jesus was thinking about his earthly father Joseph as well when speaking these words in the Gospel of John, knowing full well the meaning of his name.

Therefore, the one who says His Word never goes forth without returning to Him fulfilled, also knows that a reverent praying of the Name of the Father by enunciating the name of Joseph also will increase our fruitfulness in Him - for to be a father is to generate life. This is the literal meaning of fatherhood. Joseph therefore is not the sterile eunuch that some would believe, living his life as a passive observer of the Mystery of the Incarnation, but truly he is the Vinedresser, who within himself as within all his spiritual children, prunes away what is not necessary for salvation and increases abundantly the Life of the Divine Will in those who consecrate themselves to him. For, in order to come

under the creative hands of Joseph, one must submit as the vine does to the vinedresser.

What does Joseph prune away and increase?

Jesus says he cuts away dead branches and prunes living branches. The dead branches are thrown into the fire and the living branches, being pruned, sprout more shoots and generate more fruit. The pruning therefore is a continuous process both of the branches of promise and the branches, which lose their life sap being separated from the Vine. For, apart from Me, Jesus says, you can do nothing.

This vocation of Joseph foretold in Genesis is literally to generate more life by pruning away what is not necessary for life. To reverently call on the name of Joseph, knowing the power of his vocation as integral to the Spirit of the Eternal Father, is to generate more of the Life of Jesus within us. What a beautiful name then is the Name of Joseph. O Joseph, caretaker of the True Vine, our Jesus, fill us with His Fruitfulness by pruning away in us all that is no longer necessary to our Life with Him, burn it all up in the Fire of His Love, that He may 'grow in grace, favour, stature and wisdom' in us as He did in your home.

It is interesting to see that the pruning is also of the fruitful branches. This continual cutting back one finds so necessary in the spiritual life. No matter how one grows in Love there is always more growing to do, and more pruning away of what hinders that growth. Each person's pruning is different – so there is no hard and fast rule for all. Wherever one's greatest temptation to attachment, addiction or obsession is that which must be pruned away. Prayer above all gives increase in the Divine Life for it is at the heart of our communion with the Spirit of Jesus.

Prayer must have a foundation of integrity for it to be well grounded in the Spirit of Christ – so study of the saints, their lives and words and the teachings of the Church is so necessary, as well as a daily meditation on the Gospel, for us to grow in the maturity of our prayer. Joseph is called the Master of Prayer and

Contemplation. Saint Teresa of Avila said she did not know anyone who turned to him who did not increase in prayer and sanctity.

It is interesting to note that of the very few words describing Joseph in the New Testament these ones enclose the very meaning of the name of Joseph. After having left his parents without telling them of His whereabouts and causing them untold grief in the process, Mary finding Him said,

“See how worried your father and I have been searching for You.”

“My child, why have you done this to us? See how worried your father and I have been, looking for you.” Why were you looking for Me?” He replied “Did you not know that I must be busy with My Father’s affairs?” But they did not understand what He meant. Then, He went down with them to Nazareth and lived under their authority. His Mother stored up all these things in Her Heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom, in stature, and in favour with God and men.”

This final sentence says it all really. That under the authority of His parents, Mary and Joseph, Jesus **increased** in wisdom, stature, grace and favour with God and men. This is the literal fruit of living with Joseph and Mary. It is also the literal meaning of the name of Joseph, the essence of his vocation as well as that of Mary, for who is more fruitful than the Mother of God.

But, when one puts Mary and Joseph together in the fruitfulness of their Virginal Nuptial Fiat for the sake of the Incarnation, one receives “a double portion of their Spirit”. There is no fruitfulness greater than the Marriage of Mary and Joseph – for Jesus is the Fruit and this Fruit is Infinite in Its Power to nourish.

The Marriage of Mary and Joseph conceals within itself at the same time the Mystery of the Perfect Communion of Persons, the man and the woman in the conjugal pact and also the mystery of that singular continence for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven - a continence that served in the history of salvation "the most Perfect Fruitfulness of the Holy Spirit"

(The Theology of the Body - March 24, 1982 – Pope John Paul II)

Heaven is the recovery of the Virginal Value of Man ... It is their Virginal Marriage (Mary and Joseph's) that in history is the most perfect fruitfulness of the Spirit ... Their Marriage is the Marriage of Heaven and Earth. The Fruit of Their Marriage is the Marriage of Heaven and Earth – Jesus!

(Christopher West – on The Theology of the Body of John Paul II)

"They followed the Lamb wherever He went"

As soon as we are conceived and especially when baptized and clothed in Christ, Mary and Joseph run to us to nurture us as the "newborn" in their Son, Who they love beyond compare. They want all their children to "*increase in wisdom, grace, stature and favour with God and mankind*". They are present with Him in the celebration of every single one of the Sacraments – the Mother of God, to give Holy Spirit fruitfulness to the soul, Joseph to increase that fruitfulness with his 'pruning shears', weeding and mulching. Whenever we feel the pain of those pruning shears we know Joseph is at work in us. At every moment of loss and the grief or the relief that may come from this, we need to remind ourselves this is Joseph doing his gardening. (*I am the True Vine and My Father is the vinedresser*).

The tree or plant that is cut back sometimes looks in a sorry state, but come the season for it to flower and fruit, we are amazed at how beautiful it regenerates itself. So too with our lives, we are often amazed at how we can resurrect from the darker periods of

our lives or even near death experiences and even feel better for it, certainly stronger in spirit for it. The body may cave in, the mind lose some of its facility, the emotions feel somewhat frayed, but with Jesus, Mary and Joseph at our side we always remain spiritually strong.

The truth is universal that despite the crosses that come our way in family life, if the family supports one another, prays and stays together, they can still experience the inner joy of solidarity.

Let us always call on Joseph as Mary as Jesus did – lean on them in our struggles and sorrows as He did – ask their guardianship for all our journeys, our evictions, our exiles and homecomings. And above all place Joseph as ‘head’ over our family – as the Eternal Father and Holy Spirit did. In doing this you will see the generation of Christ in all his hidden workings – for ‘the workshop’ of Joseph is mightily fruitful. He works in such a hidden manner he is not noticed until the appointed time for his revelation, when we will see that it was he who did it all at the bidding of Jesus and Mary for us. He is Their servant par excellence.

Marked with the seal of Christ by your Baptism, Mary and Joseph will follow us wherever we go – even though we ignore them. For they followed the Lamb of God wherever He went and He is in us and therefore they are our parents and they will never leave us. We may ignore or leave them or think very little of them, but they will never leave us.

As they followed Him into the stables of contempt and poverty, they will follow us when we are reviled and humiliated. As they followed Him onto the roads of exile and exclusion they will follow us in our evictions and fearful refuges. As they followed Him into the places of obscurity and hard labour, they will follow us into the shadowlands of our life and labour with us in a hidden way to help us resurrect into the sunlight of our true self. As they called on all the angelic realms and were assisted by them, they will call them to our aid in all our needs. And in the midst of our solitude - in that most hidden of places, the loneliness of our hearts, they will come to visit us and keep us company in the

Peace that is the unique gift of Holy Family Love. If only we understood the Gift that They are wanting to give us we would open our hearts to Them, our Mother and Father.

"Physical procreation fully responds to its meaning only if it is completed by fatherhood and motherhood in the Spirit."

(Theology of the Body - Pope John Paul II - 14 April, 1982)

My Father's House is a House of Prayer for all peoples

Jesus, Who said this lived in the house of His father Joseph, a life of continuous prayer with the two greatest contemplatives the world has ever or will ever know. Joseph is described by the great saints and mystics as the Master of the Interior Life of Contemplation because he, ever in the Presence of the King and Queen of Heaven and Earth, was in imitation of Their sublime Life of Prayer and student of Their teachings.

He, like every Jewish father, led the prayers at table that had been prayed for centuries and now form the very prayers of Jesus' Holy Eucharist. The Sabbath Meal presided over by Joseph thousands of times with Jesus and Mary, are the foundation prayers for our Holy Mass. In observing his father Joseph, Jesus grew in the presence of a man of consummate prayer – and hence Sacred Scripture says, *"He grew in wisdom, stature, favour and grace with God and Man."*

For children who grow seeing only a pious mother but not a pious father grow in the confusion of not knowing which way to follow. In the House of Wisdom, the House of the Eternal Father on earth, Joseph's home, this was not the case. Joseph emulated his Beloved Spouse, the true House of Contemplation and living in Her, with Her and through Her was himself a House of Prayer. Jesus' words were truly manifest in him. *My father's house is a House of Prayer.* The following words are a perfect description of Joseph who espoused Wisdom, lived Wisdom and loved Wisdom. His pathway is the way of all who consecrate

themselves to Mary for the sake of glorifying the Holy Trinity. Wisdom Herself sings his praises.

“And now, my children, listen to Me. Listen to instruction and learn to be wise – do not ignore it. Happy those who keep My ways! Happy the man who listens to me, who day after day watches at my gates to guard the portals! For, the man who finds Me (Mary) finds Life (Jesus). He will win favour from Yahweh, but he who does injury to Me does hurt to his own soul. All who hate Me are in love with Death.’ Wisdom has built Herself a House. She has erected Her seven pillars. She has slaughtered Her beasts, prepared Her Wine. She has dispatched Her maidservants and proclaimed from the City’s heights, ‘Who is ignorant? Let him step this way.’ To the fool She says, ‘Come and eat my Bread, drink the Wine I have prepared! Leave your folly and you will live, walk in the ways of perception’.” Prov 8:33

“I come into my garden, my sister My promised Bride”

The Song of Songs 5

What kind of Chastity is called to marry Purity Itself, The Immaculate Conception? Joseph is that kind of Chastity – a Chastity the world is crying out for now – a world that has become slave to the body in its material sense alone, instead of being slave to The Body of Christ and His Spirit. In our age when the sexual abuse of children has become rampant - is this not the hour to call upon the protector of the Divine Innocence? Is this not the hour to call upon the spouse of the Immaculate Conception? Who better to invoke Their Essence upon us all who have in some measure been corrupted by this hedonistic culture that legalizes abortion and medical experiments upon the newly conceived. At no time more than now is Joseph’s virginal paternity needed. And in the age where multiple live-in relationships is preferred to marriage, what better time to invoke

the Spouse of Mary to bring into the hearts of men – a true spousal love that wants to marry and protect his wife.

“Chastity includes an apprenticeship in self-mastery which is a training in human freedom. The alternative is clear : either man governs his passions and finds peace, or he lets himself be dominated by them and becomes unhappy. Man’s dignity therefore requires him to act out of conscious and free choice, as moved and drawn in a personal way from within, and not by blind impulses in himself or by mere external constraint.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church)

The Simple Path – The Way of the Child

Through the teachings on the theology of the Body of John Paul II we are given an immeasurable gift in bringing us to understand the true meaning of the Body. For most it needs simpler language, as in the vocation of the theologian Christopher West. But there is also another way – and even simpler way and that is to enter into the Chaste Heart of Saint Joseph, wherein is the constant communion with The Immaculate Conception and Her Beloved Son. We do this by our consecration to him – that is our complete abandonment to him, in the Spirit of the Child Jesus and His Mother Mary, asking him to restore us to that chaste way of looking upon the body. When men learn to look upon women through Joseph’s eyes and see the dignity of a woman’s body as he sees it, they will learn a new way of being in their own bodies – a new way of being a man.

The children of this world take wives and husbands, but those who are judged worthy of a place in the other world and in the Resurrection from the dead, do not marry, because they can no longer die, for they are the same as the angels, and being children of the Resurrection, they are sons of God.” Luke 20:34

This text has profound implications and is pointing to the kind of ‘virginity’ that existed in Mary and Joseph for the sake of bringing all their children to the Glory of the Resurrection. Of course, Jesus, Himself is The Resurrection and The Life. So the children of The Resurrection are His children – children of His Suffering Nuptials on the Cross, which in His Mother Mary bore forth the fruit of innumerable ‘divine lives’. This is a very deep matter not to be discussed here where we are reflecting on Saint Joseph’s Virginal Nuptial Fiat with Mary and its divine fecundity.

Those, who like our Beloved Mother and Saint Joseph, forego earthly marriage in order to make a gift of themselves to God for the sake of the Kingdom, virginally father Christ in souls. These Nuptials are always in full communion with the suffering nuptials of Jesus on the Cross – nuptials which are virginal, that is of the Divine Heart.

Those who make themselves eunuchs for the sake of the Kingdom

This is an statement from Jesus expressing within it a divine appeal as He adds, “Let those who can understand this.” He is inferring a higher way of being in one’s body for the sake of the Kingdom – but also knows his children were not ready yet to understand that higher way. To make oneself a “eunuch” implies to “cut off” ones genitals or to lose one’s source of biological generation of life. To do so, for the sake of the Kingdom, implies that a new kind of generation will take place and this generation is from within the King Himself, Jesus and from His Seed of Life or His ‘semen’ – another word for ‘blood’. So giving up one’s gift of human procreation in order to generate Divine Life in Jesus’ Blood is what Jesus is inviting us to. It is a fecundity altogether of Heaven not of earth – a fecundity that does not just come from mere celibacy, but from a Virginal Nuptial Fiat with Him, in Him and through Him on the Cross. This fecundity existed in His Parents – as He says in the Gospel of Saint John,

“I have given them the Glory that You have given Me, that they may be One as We are One. With Me in them and You in Me, may they be so completely One, that the world will realize that it was You who sent Me, and that I have loved them as much as You loved Me. Father I want those you have given Me to be with me where I am, so that they may always see the Glory You have given Me, because You loved Me before the foundation of the world.” (John 17:22-24)

What exactly is this “Glory” that the Father gives to His Son. Surely it is His own Power, Wisdom and Love which in Itself is eternally fruitful in the generation of souls, for as we have seen the glory of the Father is to generate Life. This nature in man and woman which is written in their bodies is a reflection of the very Nature of God Himself called “the generative virtue”. This Divine Fecundity lost by Adam and Eve was reclaimed by the double Fiat of Mary and Joseph, wherein Christ invested in them the Glory that the Father gave to Him.

Since the name Joseph as we have seen means to “prune” or “cut off” in order to “increase Life” we can see here again, his vocation is called for – since he, at a time it would have been considered foolishness in his religion, chose virginity for himself as his spiritual path and thereby removed from himself the possibility of bringing the Promised Saviour into the world. But, since he did so, for the sake of the Kingdom, for the sake of bringing the Christ into the world – he was rewarded with the ultimate fecundity – Christ Himself and His Blessed Mother. How fruitful then is the virgin heart of Joseph – for see Who he generates – God!

Jesus is saying in all this, that those, like His parents, Mary and Joseph, who choose to be ‘barren’ in the ways of the flesh, will be given the greater fertility, which flows from the consecration of their entire selves to God for the sake of God alone. Joseph was given to Mary, the Immaculate Conception, the pro-generator of

the Divine Will, because He was like Her – full of ardour for divine generation.

They did not see this as a sacrifice, as many do, but as a gift that brought them the greatest joy. The greater sacrifice was to be asked by God to marry a human being. Only when finding out in each other that they shared the same desire for Virginal Nuptial Fiat with the Divine Will were their anxieties allayed and transformed into an even greater Joy. For a divine Joy shared is a Divine Joy doubled and multiplied infinitely.

Christ's Body – The Main Door

“Through the fact that the Word of God became Flesh, the body entered theology through the Main Door. The Incarnation and the Redemption that springs from It became also the definitive source of the sacramentality of Marriage ...

Those who seek the accomplishment of their own human and Christian vocation in marriage are called, first of all, to make this theology of the Body, whose beginning we find in the first chapters of Genesis, the content of their life and behaviour.

*How indispensable is a thorough knowledge of the meaning of the Body, in Its masculinity and femininity, along the way of this vocation! **A precise awareness of the nuptial meaning of the Body, of Its generating meaning, is necessary ...***

Knowledge of the personal dignity of the human body and of sex must still be drawn from other sources. A special source is the Word of God Himself, which contains the revelation of the body, going back to the beginning. How significant it is that Christ, in the answer to all these questions, orders ‘Man’ to return, in a way, to the threshold of his theological history!

***He orders him to put himself at the border between Original Innocence, happiness and the inheritance of the first fall.** Does He not perhaps mean to tell him that the path along which He leads ‘Man’, male and female, in the sacrament of Marriage, the path of Redemption of the body, must consist in regaining their dignity. In it there is simultaneously*

accomplished the real meaning of the human body, its personal meaning and its meaning of communion.”

For now the Two became One in Virginal Nuptial Fiat for the sake of imploring the Blessed Trinity for the coming of Christ into the world. And they were not disappointed in their desire as we know.

The essential meaning of the word ‘virgin’ is to be wholly integrated in all of one’s parts – to have no place of rupture within oneself. To be a virgin in the physical sense alone, does not automatically indicate one is of ‘virginal heart’. A person who has known sexual union, can have a ‘virginal heart’. The true virgin who is of the ‘Mind of Christ’ is one who is ‘pure’ of heart – that is of disposition and intent. When the Spirit of Virginal Love is in a person then that person loves with the same Love as God. It is a love wherein the passions of the flesh do not rule the soul, where all is subject to the Will of God in perfect Unity.

In the Kingdom of Heaven, all three members of the Holy Family were Virgin in heart, mind, soul, body and will. But this means so much more than being celibate, refraining from sexual intercourse, for even those who are celibate can be unchaste in thought, word and deed. It means to remain in possession the four original states of Adam and Eve, Original Innocence, Original Integrity, Original Nuptial Union and Original Generation (divine fecundity) and in these states, able to have true and full intercourse with the opposite sex in a wholly divine manner while fully human, similar to the Trinitarian Communion with the Resurrected Body of Christ. It means to love from within the Divine Love - the Love of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, so that the Body, *the Temple of the Holy Spirit* becomes a ‘house of prayer’, a place of divine fecundity and not a slave to any creature, human desire or addiction. As Jesus says, “they are the same as the angels”.

Saint Francis calls Mary, *the Virgin made Church*. So when Joseph marries Mary, he effectively marries the Church for the sake of generating Christ in Her members. He is husband to the

Church through a virginal fatherhood, which espouses The Immaculate Conception, for the sake of generating the ‘divine lives’ She longs to give birth to. This in essence is the priesthood of the New Covenant. In espousing The Immaculate Conception, he becomes virginal father to Jesus, the High Priest of our Faith and in Him, all priests, mystical and sacramental.

We are told by the Church that all Joseph’s prerogatives come from his espousal to Mary, that is why his feast day, *Saint Joseph, Chaste Spouse of Mary* is a solemnity. It is a solemnity because his spousehood is that higher order which is the Order of the God/Man, the Order of the Hypostatic Union, and is, therefore, the fountain for all true spousehood and fatherhood to flow upon the earth. In order for all children to be healed of the rupturing wounds of a perverse and ineffective fathering – the Josephian way of espousal to Mary and fatherhood of Christ must be invoked through prayer and attentive study. We grow into it. It is not an instant condition, but requires studious reflection and deep prayer. Above all it requires consecration to Mary, which implies a commitment to Chastity, since through Her this capacity for divine paternity flow. For the woman in desiring the best of fathers for her child, is the one who chooses this father, instructs and forms him in his initial anxious steps to meet his responsibilities and guides him with tenderness in his ways – for she alone knows in fullness the needs of her child, being gifted with the divine intuition of maternity.

“Happy the man who meditates on Wisdom and reasons with good sense, who studies Her ways in his heart and ponders Her Secrets. He pursues Her like a hunter and lies in wait by her path. He peeps in at Her windows and listens at Her doors. He lodges close to her House and fixes his peg in her walls. He pitches his tent at Her side and lodges in an excellent lodging. He sets his children in Her shade and camps beneath Her branches. He is sheltered by Her from the heat and in Her Glory he makes his home. Whoever fears the Lord will act like this and whoever grasps the Law will obtain Wisdom.

She will come to meet him like a Mother and receive him like a virgin bride. She will give him the Bread of understanding to eat and the Water of Wisdom to drink. He will lean on Her and will not fall. He will rely on Her and not be put to shame.

(Ecclesiasticus 14:20 – 15:4)

Jesus as a child needed a father. Mary as a woman with child, needed a husband. God is the God of family love. Therefore, He provided the best of husbands for His Beloved Mary and the best of fathers for His Beloved Jesus, and in doing so gave Joseph as well to the Mystical Body as both husband and father. This is the same God Who when he saw the isolation of Adam within creation, unable to find a mate of his own kind, created the beautiful Eve to be his companion. Of course, He always intended to create Eve, but His Wisdom wanted to reveal to Adam in his solitude how important it was for him to have a mate, so that when He gave her to him, he would appreciate her more.

The Wisdom of God knows appreciation and gratitude comes out of reflection in solitude – out of awareness of our lack. So in His Mercy when we sin, He drives us into the deserts created by our sins to experience an aching hunger for what we need for our happiness, hoping this hunger and thirst will lead us to prayer and in prayer to hear the gentle beckoning of His Will. In Joseph this hunger was altogether angelic – the hunger for the Divine Will to be fulfilled. All the promises of the prophets of Old he nurtured in his chaste and just heart and his fatherly compassion for all creation longed to see the Coming of the Christ. He ardently begged God in his daily prayers for the parents of Christ to be born, so that his wondrous Salvation could come upon the earth. And in this sense He fathered the New Covenant in Jesus and Mary virginally - that is through his heart.

As Mary conceived Jesus through the Ardours of Her Immaculate Heart and Jesus conceived all the redeemed through the Ardours of His Sacred Heart and the outpouring of Its Precious Blood and Water, so Joseph conceived his family through his Chaste and

noble heart. This matter of virginally conceiving through the Heart is of the Divine Order of the Trinity and needs deeper reflection in the words of the apostle John, “*God is Love and anyone who lives in Love lives in God*” – but this Love is Divine Love, which does not conceive “*of the will of Man, or urge of the flesh*”.

The Global Cry for Loving Fathers

In a world increasingly seeing fathers absent or absconding, perverse, abusive or manipulative, we are multiplying mothers of anxiety, anger, depression, increasingly aborting their babies while creating a society wherein children are given guns, videos, narcotics and various other addictions and obsessions instead of the Bread of Life and Love through holy parents. It is not that such mothers come from such fathers as a matter of course, and, it is not that such fathers come from such mothers as a matter of course. The whole confusing territory of the gender debate is not about blaming one or the other, but in seeking in the desert of our lack the understanding of what we truly need – to live in God’s Will, loving in His way of loving.

God always drives us into the wilderness of our lack, the demolition of all our plans, the frustration of our desires to create an earthly paradise, so that we can hunger and thirst for what we truly need - Him. He allows us to experience the dismantling of our illusions, the frightening absence of our rational solutions and responses, the experience of tottering on the brink of sanity wondering which way we might fall and the terror of being alone – oh, so alone that even the words of our spouse, our child, our friends, our mentors are of no use to us. God – only God suffices – but even He remains hidden, as He did for Joseph when He did not explain to him for what seemed like an eternity the reason for his wife’s pregnancy. So, all this He hopes carries us to a greater understanding of what Pope St John Paul II calls, “*the nuptial meaning of the body*” – but not without great suffering. Women have traditionally found solace in each other in a more open hearted and honest way. Men still struggle to find places and people with whom they can entrust the secret anxieties of their

hearts. The cry for fathering is as much in the heart of the father as in his child. As the poet Leonard Cohen said, *“Its Father’s Day and everyone is wounded.”*

As God continues to reveal to us the inadequacy of our therapies, psychologies and philosophies, He leads us as St Paul emphasizes to the one great Truth that Christ came to teach – that Heaven is won only through the Cross – a doctrine not easily assimilated into modern culture, which runs its economy on the principle of immediate self satisfaction. One has to feel pity for the man trying to be a father in this culture – and moreso if he wants to be a father like Jesus and St Joseph – for almost everything is against him. He will need the counsel, strength and grace of both Jesus and St Joseph to help him. For, it is startlingly obvious when one observes the life of the apostles of the early Church that the Cross and crucifixion await a man who wants to follow Christ. Even today when we had supposed we would never face the tragedy of another world war, we see the menace of racial and religious prejudice all around us, and the thirst for revenge. Yes, there is truly a global cry in every heart wanting a just and merciful fatherhood for our world. Joseph holds the ‘key’ to this great gift, which our human efforts have failed to achieve.

The Deserts of our Hunger and the Wells of our thirst

Before we finally turn, in these deserts, to the real Truth about ourselves, we have to visit the dry wells of our own solutions time and again before we understand only the Divine Way of fathering is fruitful for our happiness – only in the Divine Way of fathering is the creative virtue of the Eternal Father Who conceives and begets simply with His Will and Word. *“And the Words spoke and it came into being”*.

Such is the generative virtue of the True and only Father of all Creation. Should we try to father in any other way than His Way, we are doomed to conceive and beget deformed children. We will need to surrender our sperm banks, our cloning, our artificial means of insemination, our endless discussions about our ‘rights’

to have sexual intercourse when, where and with whom we want, to have children, when, where and with whom we want, to have same sex marriages, to clone, to experiment on the newly conceived, to manipulate gender, to manipulate our generative gift, to use our partners, girlfriends, boyfriends and spouses for our own selfish ends and, when they fail to satisfy these ends, we dump them. And these relationships also include friendships, which are a form of virginal communion that is often overlooked in these kind of reflections.

These relationships may be called ‘wells’ where we visit time and again to quench our thirst for happiness, for union, for communion. All have to literally dry up before we understand that our fullness of life and happiness is not in any of them, and, certainly not in the ways we inhabit them. As the Great Murray River, that we thought would endlessly supply our needs for water had to ‘die’, for us to realize that rivers are the mainstream of life on the land and need to be respected to maintain their purity – so too that Great River of our Generative Virtue, from which all human life springs has to abandon us, before we realize that all other means for life are sterile and unsatisfactory.

The death of our rivers and the desolation of some of our landscapes is a mere reflection of what is happening to the spirit of our humanity, when we deny that the True River of Grace, Jesus, is really present in the Holy Eucharist and living inside of us. At this denial of God’s Presence amongst us, even this “River” is drying up through the ‘abomination of desolation’ that has entered the Sanctuary, through a disbelieving priesthood – a priesthood become sterile through the lack of prayer on behalf of families, individuals and the priests themselves. For had we prayed sufficiently and in the right manner we would have holy vocations for Jesus says, *“The harvest is ripe – pray the Lord of the harvest to send labourers into the harvest.”*

So many of the Scriptures have a story about meeting at a well. This basic daily need for water, for ourselves, our animals and plants, keeps us coming to these wells. Often God intervenes here at these wells of our thirst, as He did for Jacob and Rachel

(Genesis 29) and the woman who had seven ‘husbands’. (John 4:1) I wonder what Jesus told her that brought her to the depth of truth about herself and made her change her whole life. Jesus! Speak to us as you spoke to her at the well of her thirst. At all these ‘wells’ in Sacred Scripture some kind of ‘epiphany’ occurs. This happens too in our daily lives. It is when we are thirsting for love the most, when we have tired out all our resources that He comes and speaks in our hearts, “I am the Living Water. Come to Me and drink without payment”.

The economy of words in the Gospel always requires deeper reflection. But once, again, He is saying that He alone is the True Spouse who can satisfy our souls – all our earthly marriages are but a means to the end – Jesus, Who is All in all. Our human unions are merely a temporary satisfaction always leaving us with this deepening thirst. Perhaps Jesus was saying to her, *“Give up this frustrating search for total happiness in your multiple partners and see that I am the true Husband of your soul. You may then have a husband if you wish, but you will never look to him to satisfy all your needs, putting impossible burdens on him that cannot be met”*. And of course likewise for men seeking all their satisfaction in a woman, or many women.

Interestingly in John 4, Jesus encounters a woman trapped, like many today in a series of defacto relationships. Our popular magazines have deteriorated into tragic serials of celebrities and their inability to form lasting relationships and good marriages. This woman at Jacob’s Well is very much a patron for our time. Her grace is that she listened to Jesus and she read between the lines. She interpreted the intent of His Heart and forevermore no mere man could satisfy her. Jesus meets her at Jacob’s Well, where Jacob himself met his beloved Rachel, fell in love with her and demonstrated an amazing seven years patient wait to be given her in marriage by her father, Laban, and then another seven to procure her and her dowry so that he could move on.

If we see that Jesus does nothing by chance, we can see the weave He is making of these two stories. He teases her away from her life of unsatisfactory serial monogamy and points her

thirsting heart towards Himself as “*the Living Water*”, which He knows she is truly thirsting for. The hidden suggestion of the story is that Jesus Himself has waited long years for this soul (and every soul) to be His bride – even as His ancestor Jacob. But first she must be released from the misconceptions of her view of God, Man and religion. Once again the scriptures show our relationship with Jesus in a ‘nuptial’ context – a wedding of hearts – a Love tryst – but divine, chaste and free. Jesus lived in that ambience for 30 years with His parents Mary and Joseph who reflected His way of loving.

Jesus, respecting His ancestry, knowing the purposes of God’s Will in It, uses the current knowledge of the people He speaks with to draw them to the Higher Truths and the Higher Love. He is making a serious invitation to us also in this encounter – one that we cannot escape.

We are a promiscuous people – and all this promiscuity, this serial loving, is hurting us not healing us. Jesus wants us to embrace Him and His Virginal Way of Loving. He holds out to us the example also of His Immaculate Mother and Chaste father to allow us to see the Divine Fecundity and happiness in this way of Union. We think we will lose so much if we follow this Way! Yet, we gain Heaven. For Jesus is Heaven.

If Jacob laboured happily for 14 years for his beloved Rachel and this is a human love – how much more should we be willing to wait for the consummation of our Nuptials to Jesus. Because Mary and Joseph surrendered all forms of human intercourse for the sake of the Divine, they were given Jesus as their personal Love and obedient Son.

There is a great Wisdom here that continues to escape us. Why? Because we are victims of our ‘lusting’ after so much pleasure, it has made us blind to the True Treasure. Joseph and Mary show us the way – together with Their children, the great exemplars of this way of holiness of the 20th century.

“Be fruitful and multiply”

Our Resurrection in the Generative Virtue of the Divine Will

It was because Joseph and Mary found all their happiness in Christ, even with the sorrows that this brought them, they were able to love with Christ’s Divine Virginal Love and therefore extend that Love in a universal manner to all – co creating in Him *divine lives*. In this way they lived out to the full what God had so desired to be fulfilled in Adam and Eve, when He said to them, *“Be fruitful and multiply”*. To be fruitful and multiply is the Essence of the Father’s Will and Nature and the very meaning of the name of Joseph – to generate new life. To live IN God is to live IN His Nature – and to generate His Life virginally through the heart. The fecundity of this way of loving is eternal in its dimensions. Mary and Joseph demonstrate this in the superlative degree – for it was their virginal love that attracted God to them and in which He entrusted the Conception and Birth of His only Son.

The devil’s envy, the source of all sterility, wanted to destroy this Generative Virtue in Adam and Eve through sowing his lie that they would be more fertile if they had knowledge of good and evil. This is the Lie of all lies, still prevalent today, whereby parents think that instructing their children about all manner of evil they will somehow prevent them becoming victims of it. Instead the opposite happens.

Adam and Eve’s example is frighteningly real - in listening to him they surrendered their Divine Innocence (the Divine Will reigning in them) and Its Generative Virtue and instead produced in their children the seed of corruption and rebellion that has continued down the ages – until Mary, the Immaculate Conception, was conceived and born and became the first to inherit fully the Kingdom of the Divine Will and Its Generative Virtue once again. Only because She possessed fully the Divine Will could She conceive and beget the Christ. Had She inherited any of the generational corruption of Adam and Eve this would not have been possible. In Her Divine Maternity She also possessed the Generative Virtue to conceive and beget all God’s

children fully redeemed and sanctified. Joseph became the first beneficiary of Her Divine Maternity, by espousing Her and giving Her His Fiat. Oh the sublime fecundity of this Fiat to the Immaculate Conceptions – for in Her, therefore, his virginal paternity is able to conceive Immaculate Generations of Love.

The children of Joseph and Mary know nothing of the ‘seed’ of corruption and so in consecrating ourselves to Christ through them our entry into the Heaven of Jesus is assured. For, the Spirit alone gives Life the flesh has nothing to offer – and a double portion of this Spirit comes through Joseph and Mary in the gift of our scapular consecration.

Mary is the “Tree of Life”, Joseph is Her Gardener, Jesus is the Fruit of this Tree Who She holds out to us saying, “*taste and see the goodness of the Lord*”. The Holy Family Trinitarian Union (The Order of the Hypostatic Union) is the New Garden of Eden in which the new fruitfulness of the new era of Christ comes. This fruitfulness according to the “*new and divine holiness*” for the third millennium has been taught to the Servant of God, Luisa Piccarreta as doing with Jesus and in Jesus all His Interior Acts in Creation, Redemption and Sanctification – that is living in Him in order to unite with Him in what He is doing, has done and will do. There is a difference in a person doing God’s Will in their own will and way and “living in God’s Will” and allowing Him to do all in one’s soul and body. This sublime Way of Life is too delicate and intricate to explain here – other than to say the following reveals that this Way has the approbation of Pope John Paul II – and is awaiting Its public approval from the Church.

At the centenary of the Rogationist Fathers, the Order which St Annibale di Francia founded, Pope John Paul II exhorted us to imitate St Annibale in a ‘*new and divine holiness with which the Holy Spirit wants to enrich Christians at the dawn of the third millennium*’ so as to ‘*make Christ the Heart of the World*’. (John Paul II’s Letter on the Centenary of the Rogationist Fathers’, L’Osservatore Romano, July 9, 1997, p.3) This ‘new and divine holiness’ Saint Annibale practiced was that which he learned at the bedside of the great mystic, the Servant of God, Luisa Piccarreta, of whose writings on how to live this holiness he was the first publisher and to

which he gave his imprimatur. Though her spiritual director, he became her spiritual son. His approbation of her writings is so full of superlative praises, it is impossible to dismiss them, as they come from a great saint, whose heart has been preserved incorrupt by God. In 2005, her cause for sanctification has been deposited in Rome having passed its initial phase in Corato, the land of her birth. Saint Pio called Luisa, “*the angel of Corato*” prayed the Passion from the book she wrote, “The Hours of the Passion” and was responsible for establishing in Giovanni Rotundo the first Divine Will prayer group in the world, through encouragement of his spiritual child, Federico Abresch, a Franciscan Tertiary. These approbations of great saints cannot be overlooked and should be stated in this place as all that is written here about the Generative Virtue of the Divine Will is expounded in them in a marvelous manner.

One of the exemplars of this “new and divine holiness”, Mexican Mystic and Servant of God, Conchita Cabrera di Armida said this fourth state of the spiritual life, which we shall call the generative state follows the mystical marriage of Jesus with the soul.

“To speak of the Mystical Incarnation is then to consider the soul as entering into a phase of graces of transformation which will bring it, if it corresponds, to the identification of its will with Mine and to simplify itself in order that its Union with God comes to the most perfect likeness possible. Such is the purpose of the Mystical Incarnation which the Holy Spirit gives as a gift to certain souls.” (“Conchita” - Philipon, p 158)

“There are many progressive degrees in the transformation. The highest degree on earth corresponds to a transformation of the creature not only in its manner of thinking and acting which becomes divine, but which, in a certain sense, causes it to disappear and annihilate itself to give place to Me. This degree is the work of the Holy Spirit alone Who becomes the Soul of this soul and the Life of this body.” (ibid: Conchita, Aug 6 1912)

The Immaculate Conception, our Mother, is the first Reliquary of this Divine Holiness in the world, as indeed She is first in everything – and, of course, Jesus is Its Living Embodiment. Abba Joseph in espousing The Immaculate Conception, becomes the first beneficiary of Her Inheritance. The most holy Trinity desires to bring to fulfillment Jesus’ prayer in the Our Father, *“Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done on earth as it is in Heaven”* through this Way of holiness. The Fecundity of becoming another Christ is naturally greater than to just serve Christ or imitate Christ in the best way we know how. Jesus has longed to incarnate Himself in each one of us. This is the very reason for the Institution of the Holy Eucharist – that He be released from His confinement in the *‘host’* of bread to take up living residence in our souls, so that we become, *‘living hosts’* of His Person and Will. But our communions with Him, unless they are lived in Him, with Him and through Him, fall short of true Union, which can only come when He is loved with His own Heart and Will.

Jesus wants us to be instructed by our Immaculate Mother in how to do this. Abba Joseph is the Guardian/father of this new incarnation of Christ and should be called at all times to protect Jesus in us. Through his Espousal of the Immaculate Conception he became of One Mind and Spirit with Her and thereby receives from Her as She wills. She gives all of the power of the Divine Paternity to him so that he can fulfill his role as guardian/provider of Christ and all the children of the Church.

Jesus’ Love for His Father

It is impossible to read the magnificent Gospel of Saint John and not see that the Essence of Jesus’ Mission is to fulfill the Will of His Father and bring to His Father the Eternal Glory of a Creation fully reconciled to that Will.

“But the world must be brought to know that I love the Father and that I am doing exactly what the Father told Me ... for the Father is greater than I” John 14:31, 28

Now this Love for His Heavenly Father has its particular manifestation in His Love for Saint Joseph. If this Love is the Essence and purpose of His Life, His love for His Abba Joseph is intrinsic to it. If one wants the purest water one must climb up to the source of its flow to get it. In Saint Joseph is this source wherein Jesus and Mary poured the Spirit of the Eternal Father, so through him it could be deposited in all men. It is his heaven-appointed task to quench our thirst for fatherhood from this fountain. His Paternal Breast is aching to give to all men of what he himself has been the depositary.

Every time Jesus spoke to him Joseph received a new anointing of his fatherhood. If the Word Himself spoke to Joseph the word, “Abba” thousands of times in decades of years and His Word never goes forth without doing what it says, then the anointing of the Spirit of the Eternal Father impregnated in this Word imbedded himself more deeply in Joseph each time. All the angels were in wonder at the Creating Word addressing His creature as ‘Abba’.

If this same Creating Word said ‘Let there be light’ and there was light in that same instant, what creation took place in Joseph when this same Word cried out ‘Abba’. His Paternal Heart opened more and more so that it could include the whole of God’s children in the flow of its Life giving Unction. As heavy rains swell the creek and river to bring an overflow of water – what must it have been like for the heart of Saint Joseph when the two Great Rivers of God’s Rain of Mercy, Jesus and Mary, poured Their Love into him. Surely the cascading waterfalls of Grace and the magnificent overflows of Mercy were sublime to see by the angels that formed his court. In all this he was acting in Union with His Holy Spouse Mary. They both lived in the Truth of these words of Jesus their Son,

*“Anyone who loves Me and keeps My Word, My
Father will love him and We shall come to him
and make our home in him”*

Yes, the new temple into which the Ark of God's Mercy was brought, not by human hands but by the hands of God Himself, was the humble home of Joseph, the carpenter, enshrined in silence, decorated with humble labours, filled with ardent prayer. Jesus could say of both his Father's homes, "*My Father's House is a House of Prayer*". To all who would ask, "*Can anything good come out of Nazareth?*" His answer is to enter Joseph's home and submit to his tutelage so we see exactly where Good resides and what father He chooses for Himself. It is from the home of Joseph and Mary that God Himself came forth "*like a bridegroom from his tent*" to shed His Light upon the darkness of the human mind and soul. Yes, this is the True '*Tent of Meeting*' wherein God speaks to His people and these are the '*two cherubs*' who hover over the Throne of Mercy. In the Hebraic tradition the two cherubs represent the masculine and feminine aspects of the Shekinah (The Radiant Presence of God). They have the faces of children, because they represent the spirit of childlike docility to God's Word. Such are the 'cherubs' Mary and Joseph, the guardians of the House of Mercy.

Our Joseph is the Custodian of the Bread of Life, which he kept safely hidden in his home until the appointed time came for Him to be given to a hungry world. Bethlehem means 'house of bread'. Joseph saw the rejection of Jesus and Mary in Bethlehem, so he decided to make a true 'Bethlehem' in his own home as a recompense for this sin. Our Joseph is largely forgotten by his brothers who disdain him because of his apparent lack of importance and take the few words spoken of him in scripture to mean he is not particularly significant in the story of our Redemption. However, in God's Kingdom what is most shrouded in silence is what is most important.

Who can understand how many graces were requisite to make Saint Joseph worthy of the title of Father of Jesus, and to enable him to fulfill all its duties? So far, as a man is capable of participating in the Paternity of God the Father, so far was Joseph adorned and enriched with

heavenly graces. And, this implies such an amount of greatness, that God alone can know its weight and measure. If, in Solomon's Temple, which contained The Ark of the Covenant, everything was to be covered with gold what graces must have gilded the soul, the heart, the breast of this holy man, the living throne of the Living God, in whose arms reposed the Lord of all the Angels!

"Divine Favours granted to Saint Joseph" p 44 Pere Binet

The importance of a person in a company is often seen in how much time the head of that company spends in the company and tutelage of that employee. If that be so, then the near thirty years that Jesus spent in the company of Saint Joseph indicate the high office to which He was called and the fruitfulness of that office for His future Church. Also, the more important the product of the company, the more secret are its files. Joseph is surrounded in the Silence of God, indicating the particular sacredness of his office and how it has special significance to Jesus and Mary alone in a manner not to be revealed for general appraisal – *until the appointed time*, which prophecy has revealed is now in the third millennium – as confirmed by our late Holy Father, John Paul II.

Saint Therese's Prophecy

"Civilization is in peril, society is tottering, hasten to Him who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Restore with haste that dismantled Sanctuary, which is the family. Thence will come your salvation."

Saint Therese of Lisieux - Carmelite

One might have thought these words were from a current newspaper and not from behind the walls of a Carmelite enclosure over 100 years ago. They are prophetic and commanding of attention than ever. Her words are echoed in the Apostolic Letter, *"Guardian of the Redeemer"* by Pope John Paul II when he called the family, *"that sanctuary of love and cradle*

of life” and wherein he exhorted us to turn to the Holy Family as our model for the Family Life we so long for. Jesus said,

*“No one has seen God! It is His only begotten Son
Who is nearest the Father’s Heart
Who has made Him known.”*

He has made Him known primarily through the way He lived within His own family life on earth. For Ephesians tells us every family takes its name from the Father. Above all the Holy Family is the reflection of the Father’s Love. In the Holy Family Jesus begins to manifest the prophecy of Isaiah, *“He will rebuild the crumbling ruins and restored the ruined houses”*. The first place He did this was in His way of honouring His virgin father and Mother, so that within that honouring and the divine Blessings intrinsic to it, Mary and Joseph became the depositories of the Divine Will for all the generations to draw from, so that they too may become mothers and fathers of Christ, in all His Incarnations.

And so it was! For says Abbot Rupert, “At the same time that God formed the Body of His Son from the Most Pure Blood of the Virgin, He infused into the heart of Joseph His own Paternal Love, in order that the latter might be for the Incarnate Word on earth, what He Himself is to the Uncreated Word in Eternity.”

As the formation of the Body of Christ through the Nuptial Union of Mary with The Holy Spirit has no equal – the formation of the Divine Paternity in Saint Joseph through his nuptial Unity with the Eternal Father has no equal, for in both cases, the end was the Conception, Birth and Nurture of the Son of God. As Adam cried out in his joy when he saw Eve on his awakening, *“At last this is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh”* – Saint Joseph’s joy must have been unequalled when given in Nuptial Love to the Spouse of the Holy Spirit. He eventually came to know this was for the sake of fathering Jesus and so his Joy was unparalleled in history – a double blessing. For as well as being given to the Queen of

Heaven as her Spouse, God Himself wanted him for His father. As there is no grace equivalent to this, there must be no saint greater than Saint Joseph. While living in the Divine Will is the highest and greatest Gift a soul can be blessed with, if God gives the embodiment of His Divine Will to Joseph, one must suppose He would also give him the Spirit that is the Substance of these Two Bodies, Mary and Jesus. For the body without the soul is no more than a mere shell. It is for these reasons and more I propose that Abba Joseph lives in the Divine Will as his Spouse and Son. For not to, would fracture the Unity of the Order of the Hypostatic Union of which the Church teaches us he is an integral member. To have the Family of the God/Man fractured and disunited is unthinkable.

The Purpose of the Eucharist

When Mary saw Jesus issuing from Her Womb, so too was Her unequalled Joy at seeing the manifestation of Uncreated Light from within Her. And this Uncreated Light had taken possession of Her Flesh and from Her Flesh His own. This Joy in Mary, witnessed first by Joseph was the foreshadowing of the Joy we also receive when we live completely in His Will and His Uncreated Light emanates from us, because we are completely possessed by the Holy Spirit. This is the Joy above all other Joys. For Mary and Joseph were so possessed before the Blessed Sacrament was instituted.

And even when we receive the Blessed Sacrament in Holy Communion, unless we are living in His Will, He cannot remain substantially in us in the manner He so desires, for our conflicted souls evict Him. So simply to receive the Body and Blood of Christ is not enough for us to experience the complete possession of God in His Holiness. We must “die to ourselves” (our wills) and allow His Will to be our only habitation, which was the Life of Mary and Joseph. In this is the reality, which is the purpose and intention of the Eucharist and its Sacrament. Once the accidents of the bread and wine are consumed Jesus wants to remain in us in the Real Substance of His Will, but He cannot if our wills are opposed to Him. In this sense He leaves us to

ourselves. He does not leave us fully, otherwise we would die – but He cannot inhabit us totally to His Joy and ours.

Joseph, “The Prince dancing around Her Throne”

Psalm 87:7

We conclude our meditation by remembering that Joseph is custodian of the Ark of Mary, who we are asked to enter as our Way of Safe Return to the Father’s House, Jesus. He ushers us on board and nourishes us as his children on the Bread of Life. He guards the Eucharistic Life of Christ in us and its Reality, Life lived in God’s Will. He is the Head of the Order of the Hypostatic Union, which is the highest order in the Church either angelic or human. He holds the keys to the True Tabernacle of God’s Presence, Mary. He will keep us faithful in true poverty of spirit, assiduous labour and ardent prayer. He protects the unprotected and gives his Spirit to fathers and husbands, especially the virgin fathers of the Church, the priests. He is an initiate into the Mystery of the Incarnation in Holy Family Life and the depository of Its Divine Fatherhood, which he is longing to give to all men. The Book of Wisdom elucidates him, who cannot be fully grasped for he is by nature as elusive as the air.

“Like all the others, I too am a mortal man, descendant from the first being fashioned from the earth. I was modeled in flesh within my mother’s womb ... I was nurtured in swaddling clothes, with every care ... for all there is only one way into life and out of it. And so, I prayed and understanding was given me. I entreated and the Spirit of Wisdom came to me. I esteemed Her more than scepters and thrones. Compared with Her, I held riches as nothing ... I loved Her more than health and beauty, preferred Her to the light, since Her Radiance never sleeps. In Her company, all good things came to me ... but, as

yet, I did not know She was their Mother. What I learned without self-interest, I pass on without reserve. I do not intend to hide Her riches. For, She is an inexhaustible treasure to men, and those who acquire it win God's friendship, commended as they are to Him by the benefits of Her teaching ... She it is Who I loved and searched for from my youth. I resolved to have Her for my Bride. I fell in love with Her Beauty. Her closeness to God lends luster to Her noble birth, since the Lord of all has loved Her. Yes, She is an initiate into the Mysteries of God's knowledge, making choice of the works He is to do ... I, therefore, determined to take Her to share my life, knowing She would be my counselor in prosperity, my comfort in cares and sorrow. Through Her, I shall be acclaimed where peoples gather ... By means of Her, Immortality shall be mine ... pure contentment in Her friendship, inexhaustible riches in whatever She does, intelligence in the cultivation of Her society and renown in the fellowship of Her conversation. I went in all directions seeking by what means I might make Her mine. I was a boy of happy disposition. I had received a good soul as my lot, but knowing I could not master Wisdom except by the Gift of God ... I turned to the Lord and entreated Him ... with all my heart I said, "God of our ancestors, Lord of Mercy, ... grant me Wisdom, Consort of Your Throne ... for I am your servant ... with small understanding of justice and the laws ... You, Yourself have chosen me ... You had bidden me build a temple on Your Holy Mountain, an Altar in the City where You have pitched Your Tent, a copy of that Sacred

Tabernacle which You prepared from the beginning. With You is Wisdom! She who knows Your Works - She who was present when You made the world. She understands what is pleasing in Your eyes and what agrees with Your commandments. Dispatch Her then from the Holy Heavens! Send her forth from Your Throne of Glory to help me and to toil with me and teach me what is pleasing to You, since She knows and understands everything. She will guide me prudently in my undertakings and protect me by Her Glory. Then all I do will be acceptable. I shall govern your people justly and shall be worthy of my Father's Throne.

If this prayer of Solomon for the Gift of Wisdom was heard, how much more when it came from the lips of the Chaste and Just Saint Joseph, the one to father God. Surely the fullness of its Essence was given with a Glory far beyond Solomon's glory – for, though the Queen of Sheba came to deposit enormous wealth into Solomon's Palace, on account of his reputed wisdom and just government, the Queen of Heaven came and deposited the Wealth of Heaven into Joseph's humble home and heart. I pray then,

“Who then are you, O beloved Abba Joseph, to have won so great a prize, so high and exalted a Mission? I, for one, cannot tell about you. My few words here are only that I can say I made the effort to speak in your honour, because I could not live with myself, if I did nothing to exalt your most holy person. For you fed, clothed and nourished my Saviour and saved Him from death, whereas I caused His death and you loved and protected Him and my Mother, whereas I so often have abandoned them, and you did for Them all I would have liked to have done but could or would not.

You make recompense for all I have omitted, but, nonetheless you draw me always to come home to Them as your child. I owe you so much and I love you so little in comparison to your worthiness. You stand at the entrance to the 'stable' of my heart and you call the angels to come and attend on me to make a suitable place for Jesus to be born. You usher into this 'stable' the wealth of His Kingdom – the gold of Divine Love, the frankincense of Divine Prayer and the Myrrh of Divine Sorrow. You protect Jesus' Presence in me from the predatory spirits of this world, and if necessary you take me into places of exile where His Life in me will be saved under the Holy Cloak of your protection. You hide me from all that would steal His Life in me or deface His image in my soul. With Jesus I say to you, "I love you, my father. I love you with the Divine Love of my Eternal Father and Mother and I beg for the sake of all creation that you restore on earth His Divine Fatherhood. Amen. Fiat."

Great saints have spoken of the glorious Saint Joseph and I leave you with their wonderful words to excite in you greater love for him.

"Yes, next to God, Saint Joseph is the first object of the Most Blessed Bride's Love and he holds first place in Her Heart, for Mary being totally given to Joseph as the Bride to Her husband, the Heart of Mary totally belonged to Joseph ... It is therefore logical that Jesus is but of One Heart with Mary. As a result, we can say that Mary is but of One Heart with Joseph, and Joseph is consequently but of One Heart with Jesus and Mary." St John Eudes



The admirable Saint Joseph was given to the earth to express the adorable Perfection of God the Father in a tangible way. In his person alone, he bore the beauties of God the Father, His Purity and Love, His Wisdom and Prudence, His Mercy and Compassion. One saint alone is destined to represent God the Father while an infinite number of creatures, a multitude of saints are needed to represent Jesus Christ. For the work of the whole Church is solely to give an outward manifestation of the virtues and the perfection of its adorable Head and Saint Joseph alone represents the Eternal Father ... Hence, the majestic Saint Joseph must be considered as the greatest, the most famous and the most incomprehensible person in the world. The Father, having chosen this saint to make of him His Image on earth, gives him, along with Himself, a likeness of His invisible and hidden nature and, in my view, this saint is beyond the state of being understood by the minds of humans ... ” La Journee Chretienne

Saint Francis de Sales ... in contrast with other authors does not think he should set up degrees of (sanctity between Mary and Joseph) allowing the Mother of God to hold some sort of first place. He grants that Joseph had a kind of beauty and wisdom that knew no limitations since he was Christ' guardian on earth ..

(“Discovering Saint Joseph” by Father Andrew Doze)

“The Son of God, having made Himself visible by taking on human flesh, conversed and visibly dealt with God his Father, in the person of Saint Joseph, by whom the Father made Himself visible to Him.”
... *“Jesus saw in him the Eternal Father as His*

Father and the most Blessed Virgin considered in his person the same Eternal Father of whom She was the Bride.” Saint Francis de Sales



“For at last I will not be afraid to say it – My Saviour I know you better on the Cross and in the shame of your torture than I do in this lowliness and this hidden life. Your Body is all in shreds, Your Face covered with blood and, far from appearing as God, You do not even have the figure of a man. Nevertheless You are not so hidden from me and, through so many clouds, I see a few rays of Your greatness in this constant determination by which You overcome the worst torments. Your suffering has dignity, since it makes You find a worshipper in one of the companions who shares Your torture. But here, (in the home of Joseph and Mary), I see nothing that is not lowly and, in this state of self annihilation, an ancient writer is justified in saying that You are abusive to Yourself. ‘He is abusive to Himself, because He seems to be doing nothing and is useless to the world’.’ But, He does not reject this ignominy. He really wants this injury to be added to all the other He has borne, provided that by hiding Himself with Joseph and with the Blessed Mary, he may teach us by this great example that if some light is brought forth in the world, it will come from the wish to be of benefit to us, and to obey His Father -that, in fact, all greatness consists in conforming ourselves to God’s commands, in whatever way He may wish to dispose of us. And finally, that this obscurity we

fear so much is so illustrious and glorious, that it can be chosen even by a God.”

Bossuet, Sermons of 19th March, 1656, 1659, 1661

Of course this writer did not know about the absolute sublimity of the Interior Works of Jesus, lived out in this obscurity and humble labour – these Acts in the Divine Will which were to redo all the acts of human beings in family life, so that Jesus could reform all relationships in family life into the Divine Order of the Divine Will. But, as Bossuet says, because these Acts are not seen, nothing Jesus does exteriorly seems to be of much value. How little does human reason know and how poorly does it weigh and measure the things of God.

“All Christians belong to Joseph, because Jesus and Mary belonged to him. Rejoice, devout servants of Saint Joseph, for you are close to Paradise. The ladder leading up to it has but three rungs, Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Here is how one climbs up or down this Ladder. As you climb up, your requests are first placed in the hands of Saint Joseph, Saint Joseph hands them over to Mary and Mary to Jesus. As you climb down, the responses come from Jesus, Jesus delivers them to Mary and Mary hands them over to Joseph. Jesus does everything for Mary for He is Her Son. Mary, as His Mother, obtains everything and Joseph, as a righteous man, husband and father can do all things.” St Leonard of Port-Maurizio, a famous Franciscan preacher of the 18th century canonized by Pius IX.

“Pius IX took advantage of a strong movement supported by numerous petitions to proclaim officially the patronage of Saint Joseph over the Universal Church on 8th December, 1870 in the grandiose setting of the Vatican Council – 16 years after the proclamation of his Spouse’s Immaculate Conception, 8th December, 1854. Dating from 1815 under Pius VII, this

movement wanted Joseph's name to appear in the canon of the Mass and in other official prayers of the Church. It wanted him to be named before Saint John the Baptist in the Litany of the Saints." Such children of Joseph were most likely aware of this great prophecy of his client, Saint Isidore of Isolanus, an Italian Dominican of the 17th century. We want to resurrect their enthusiasm today and have done so by petitioning Cardinal Francis Arinze along the same lines, for it is timely and urgently so to elevate the Guardian Father of the Universal Church to his proper stature. Please do the same in union with us, for the sake of souls.

"The Lord, in order to honour His Name, decided to make Saint Joseph the leader and the patron saint of the militant Church. Before the Day of Judgment all the peoples will know and revere the Name of the Lord, and the magnificent gifts that god has given Saint Joseph, gifts He has wanted to keep almost hidden for a long period of time. It is then that the name of Joseph will abound with all the goods of the earth. Churches will be built in his honour, peoples will celebrate his feasts and will make solemn promises to him. For the Lord will open the ears of their intelligence and great men will scrutinize the inner gifts of God hidden in Saint Joseph and will discover a precious treasure such as we do not find its like in any of the fathers of the Old Testament. This will happen especially through the enlightenments given by the holy angels. Saint Joseph will give graces from Heaven on high to people who will invoke him and he himself, constantly surrounded with the majesty of his Glory, will borrow nothing from any mortal. The name of Saint Joseph will be honorably placed on the calendar of the saints and he will no longer be the last. For a main feast will be set to

venerate him. The Vicar of Christ on earth, prompted by the Holy Spirit, will rule that the Feast of the faster-father of Christ and of the husband of the Queen of the world, be celebrated throughout the Church ...”



“Can we find any other man like this, possessing the Spirit of God? So Pharaoh said to Joseph, ‘Seeing that God has given you knowledge of all this, there can be no one as intelligent and wise as you. You shall be my chancellor, and all my people shall respect your orders. Only this Throne shall set me above you. I hereby make you Governor of the whole Land of Egypt’. Pharaoh took the ring from his hand and put it on Joseph’s ... He made him ride in the best chariot he had after his own, and they cried before him ‘Abrek’, which means, ‘Make way’. Gen 42:8, 45, 41:37



The Four States of the Spiritual Life in the Order of The Hypostatic Union The Highest Order in Creation



Illuminative State of the Hypostatic Union of Trinitarian Light

By the God's reassurance of Joseph through His Angel, Joseph is first to enter, with great Awe and Wonder, the Presence of the Immaculate Mother with Child moments after the Incarnation. Joseph thereby enters the Illuminative State of the Hypostatic Union of Trinitarian Light: to know Christ through Mary, by the Gifts of Knowledge and Understanding, as the Redeemer from His Mother's Womb. He becomes the first child of the Church and virgin father of the immaculate generations of childlike trust in God through Her. His reward for such trust is to be illuminated to the Light of the Cross in the nuptial meaning of the Body of Christ in Mary Who, as the Immaculate Conception, generates an Innocent Creation within Her Virginal Nuptial Love of the Father in the Fiat of Creation. By these graces Joseph illuminates all husbands to *the illuminative state of the conjugal life* to know their wives "in spirit and in truth" and priests to "know, love and serve Christ" in His Church.

Unitive State of the Hypostatic Union of Trinitarian Love

By Joseph's Espousal of the Immaculate Conception - Mary, *the unitive meaning of the conjugal union* is virginally fulfilled through, with and in him. Joseph enters the Unitive state of the Hypostatic Union of Trinitarian Love: which is to embrace the Cross in Christ for the sake of the unification of the members of His Body. He virginally fathers the generations of docility to the Wisdom and Counsel of the Immaculate Conception, our true Mother - protecting and providing for Her Spiritual Works of Mercy. Joseph is the model of how one is to look chastely upon

the body of woman in the fullness of her capacity for maternity, and in this the revelation of the mysteries of Mary's Divine Maternity. From this reverence for all women is engendered; holy matriarchy and virginal priesthood both ministerial and mystical.

Purgative State of the Hypostatic Union of Trinitarian Mercy

Through uniting his "Fiat" with the "Fiat" of Mary, Joseph enters *the purgative state of conjugal life* through entering the Acts of Redemption in the Body of the Christ and Mary's Acts of Co-Redemption. The Mother and father of Jesus must share in all His works of Mercy, lived out in the pain, tears, sufferings and sorrows of His Sacred Body, Mind, Soul, Heart and Will; allowing His Humanity to feel the weight of our sins. Joseph is called by the Church "*master of the interior life*". It is in his interior he united with the Redemptive Acts of His beloved Son and Spouse; as well as continuously labouring with his body for all their needs and the demands of the Divine Will to do corporal acts of Mercy for the salvation of souls. Because Jesus is his Son by election of God – Joseph labours for all the redeemed children of the Church in Him, with Him and through Him. In this he reveals the *purgative meaning of the conjugal state* whereby children are safeguarded by the labours of their parents; which the Church calls *corporal works of Mercy*. He reveals also to priests how assiduously they must labour for the salvation of souls – being espoused as they are to the Church for the sake of Her children.

Generative State of the Hypostatic Union of Trinitarian Life

Having been illuminated by the angel of God, united to Mary in Virginal Espousals and sanctified through the Grace of Christ his Son, Joseph enters *the generative state of conjugal union* in Its highest degree – a degree that can only be entered into by those who espouse the Immaculate Conception, our Mother. In becoming husband to the Immaculate Conception, he generates

through Her a divine humanity in, with and through his Son. St Paul speaks of human marriage as reflective of this higher form of Nuptial Love. *“This is a great Mystery, but I speak of it as regards Christ and His Church”.* (Eph 5:32) Also, Saint John reveals, *“But to all who did accept Him, He gave power to become children of God – to all who believe in the Name of Him, Who was born not out of human stock or urge of the flesh or will of man but of God Himself”* (John 14:12-14) Jesus Himself says, *“Do not be surprised when I say you must be born from above ... For what is born of flesh is flesh and what is born of the Spirit is spirit.”* (Jn 3:5)

And the angel tells Joseph, *“Don’t be afraid to take Mary home as your wife for what is conceived in Her is of the Holy Spirit.”* This is the first time a human being conceived purely of the Holy Spirit through Virginal Fiat with the Father’s Will; and Joseph is asked to take this Immaculate Conception home with him to protect and nurture. He therefore becomes the husband and father to this new way of generating Life. All priests are asked to do the same – virginally generate Christ in the Heart of the Church; but, this is impossible without virginal espousal to Mary. Joseph is the one who shows the way to this altogether new way of spousal Love and Life. In each of the 7 Sacraments priests begin this work using Christ’s own words and the Power of His Blessing to generate His Life in the children of the Church. This virginal fecundity embodied in the Holy Orders of priesthood is the marvellous reality of Joseph’s virginal fatherhood enacting its hidden power in the Church every day. This Power is truly generative of the Holy Spirit of God and the source of Life in the Church, when it is lived in the spirit of Joseph.

* Our Holy Mother had Four Virginal Espousals– with the Eternal Father for the sake of generating the Fiat of Creation, with the Eternal Son for the sake of generating the Fiat of Redemption and with the Holy Spirit for the sake of generating the Fiat of Sanctification. With Abba Joseph She entered also virginal espousals for the sake of re-uniting created man with his Original Innocence and through it beginning the Generations of that Innocence which was intended by God from the beginning. These generations are not conceived according to the flesh but according to the Spirit – even as Christ was conceived – for these children of the Spirit are reborn in the Body of Christ to the fullness of their heavenly destiny.

Complementarity of Family Life for the Model upbringing of the Child according to the Divine Order of the Hypostatic Union through, with and in the Marriage of Mary and Joseph

The Holy Family contains the Purifications, Illuminations, Unions and Generations of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in Jesus, Mary and Joseph, so that ‘on earth as in heaven’ all might fulfill the states of mystical priest, spiritual child, spouse, and parent. The virginal perfection of each state in Jesus, Mary and Joseph is for the right-ordering, edification, and sanctification of married and family life, that the vocations of the priest, religious, single-consecrated and married might be restored to the Order intended by Him “in the beginning”. God’s image and likeness in “Man” as ‘male and female’, was restored through the Marriage of Mary and Joseph to reveal complementary parenting through, with and in the Model upbringing of the Child Jesus, Who “*went down with them to Nazareth and was subject to them*”, for all generations to emulate. These 30 years of obedience to His creatures are of profound importance in our emulation of the Incarnation Mystery – living in It, through, with and in Him.

While Mary and Joseph are unique in their privileges and it may be tempting to think it is impossible to emulate them and their relationship with Jesus; the word of Jesus Himself tell us that those who do the Will of His Father are his mother, father, sister and brother. We might also say, “How is this so?” Let us remember that every day Jesus descends from Heaven into the ‘womb’ of the Church, the Holy Eucharist, and there He is given birth in order to give Himself to us – not just into our arms but into the very interior of our being. His humility with us is even greater than with His Mother for She was Immaculate and fully one with Him. With us however we know we are more like the cold stable into which He was born. Yet, He comes to us humbly as He did to that stable emanating Light, Peace and Love and asking us to mother and father Him as Mary and Joseph did.

The reason for these meditations is to help us enter the interior dispositions of Mary and Joseph in order that we do so well.

To support the above we quote from
“The Life and Glories of Saint Joseph”
by Edward Healy Thompson M.A.

**Joseph is included in the Order of
the Hypostatic Union**

CHAPTER II

In the Contents Page this Chapter, Chapter II, is summarized in this way:

- ✿ Divers Orders in the hierarchy of grace.
- ✿ The highest - that of the Hypostatic Union.
- ✿ Joseph has place in this order.
- ✿ The doctrine - no mere private opinion.
- ✿ Conclusions by theologians.
- ✿ Joseph's exalted honour.
- ✿ His pre-eminence over all saints.
- ✿ His superiority to the angels.
- ✿ Head of the Holy Family.
- ✿ Representative of the Eternal Father.
- ✿ His graces commensurate with his dignity.
- ✿ Our interest therein.

1. THE HIERARCHIES OF HEAVEN AND OF EARTH:

"Whatever God disposes is disposed in a marvellous and perfect order. Wherefore, the Church, which Jesus came to found on earth imitates the Heavenly Sion. As in Heaven there are angelical hierarchies, and in these hierarchies there are divers orders, so also on earth there is a hierarchy of grace, and in that hierarchy are included various orders, or ministries, which, according to the Angelic Doctor, St Thomas, excel each other in proportion to their approximation to God.

2. THE ORDER OF THE HYPOSTATIC UNION: The highest of all these orders, whether angelic or human, is the Order of the Hypostatic Union, in which is Christ Jesus, God and man.

By the Hypostatic Union is meant that the Eternal Son of God, in His Incarnation, assumed human nature, and united it to Himself in Personal Unity. In other words, that in the One Divine Person of Jesus Christ, the two Natures, the Divine Nature and the Human Nature, ever distinct in themselves, became inseparably and eternally united. If a wonderful order is displayed in all the works of nature, an order supremely perfect is displayed in all the works of grace, especially in the great work of the Incarnation.

3. THE ORDER OF PATRIARCHS: Among these orders of grace some precede the mystery of the Incarnation, others follow it. Among those which precede it the most remote is the order of the Patriarchs, chosen to prepare the progenitors of Jesus down to Saint Joachim and Saint Anne. To some of these as to Abraham and David, it was expressly revealed that of their blood and of their family the Saviour of men should be born.

4. THE LEVITICAL ORDER: The next is the levitical and sacerdotal order, which was preordained by God to prefigure in all its rites the Priesthood of Jesus, His Church, His Sacraments, the Bloody Sacrifice of the Cross, and the Unbloody Sacrifice of the Altar.

5. THE ORDER OF PROPHETS: The third is that of the Prophets, destined to foretell and announce to the world, so many centuries before the coming of Jesus, His Birth of a Virgin, His country, the place of His Nativity, His flight into Egypt, His Apostles, His preaching, His miracles, His Passion, His Death, His Resurrection, His glorious Ascension into Heaven. Greater than all these Prophets was John the Baptist, because destined and preordained to be the immediate Precursor of Christ, and to point to Him as being actually present on the earth, whence Jesus Himself affirmed that among those who were born of woman there was not a greater prophet than John the Baptist. These are the orders which under the Old Law preceded Jesus.

6. THE ORDERS THAT SUCCEEDED JESUS: FIRST AMONG THEM THE APOSOLIC : Others succeeded Him. And these are the various orders of ministries of Holy Church, which form the ecclesiastical hierarchy, beginning with the

Apostles. The Apostles were to render to the whole earth and for all ages their solemn testimony to the Divinity of Jesus Christ. They were to announce to all His Doctrine, His Law, His Sacraments. They were to found and to spread His Church throughout the world, so that all might attain to salvation. And, as the Apostolic Order was nearer than any other to Jesus, even so, says the Angelic Doctor, did the Apostles receive greater grace than any saints in the other orders of the church. Of the inferior orders we need not here speak.

7. THE ORDER OF THE HYPOSTATIC UNION : Now above all these orders rises supreme the Order of the Hypostatic Union. All the other orders, comprising even the angelic, are subordinate and subject to it. For this reason, that Jesus is the beginning, the author, and the Head of this Order, and on Jesus, as Sovereign Prince, depends every hierarchy, every sacred principedom in heaven and on earth, since Jesus, as the Apostle says, is the end of the whole law. Jesus is the chief corner stone upon which rests the whole sacred edifice of the Church. Jesus, according to the Prophet Isaiah, is set up as an ensign to the people, the desire of all nations, the centre of universal hope. Jesus is the sole and true source of salvation to all men. By faith in Him who was to come all were saved who lived justly from Adam until His day. And all those who have lived and shall live justly since His coming have been and shall be saved by Him alone, is truth, salvation, and Life. So that, even as the planets in the firmament revolve round the sun, receiving from it light, heat and power, so also around Jesus, the Eternal Sun of Justice, all the various orders of grace circle, from Him alone receiving light, virtue, and power to fulfil faithfully the holy offices to which they are ordained. And so much the greater or the less grace and dignity do they receive as they are more or less approximated in their ministry to Jesus, the author of grace, just as one who is nearer to the fire participates more largely in its heat. **It is clear then, that the order of the Hypostatic Union transcends and surpasses the other subaltern orders, even as the sun transcends the inferior stars.**

8. JOSEPH IS PLACED IN THIS SOVEREIGN ORDER : Now, Joseph by divine predestination was placed in this sovereign order. Three only composed it - JESUS, MARY and JOSEPH. Jesus is true God and true Man, Mary is true Mother of God and Mother of men. Joseph is true spouse of Mary and putative father of Jesus. Jesus is the principle subject of the Incarnation, and the author of the Redemption of the world. Mary is the immediate co-operatrix and, so to say, the executrix of the Incarnation itself. Joseph, the faithful depositary of these two most precious pledges, was to provide that this sublime Mystery of the Incarnation and Redemption should be brought about with the greatest possible congruity, so that the honour of the Mother of the God Man, Her Son, should remain intact.

10. That Joseph should be comprised in this supreme Order is not a mere devout opinion or the fruit of pious meditation - it is a sure decision of the soundest theology. Suarez, that eminent theologian, after having spoken of the Order of the Apostles, upon which he said the greatest grace was conferred, goes on to say: "There are other ministries pertaining to the Order of the Hypostatic Union, which in its kind is more perfect, as in this Order is constituted the ministry of Saint Joseph - and, although it be in the lowest grade of it, nevertheless, in this respect, it surpasses all others, because it exists in a superior Order". (Tom, ii, disp, viii, sec. 1) Thus spoke Suarez, the learned theologian of Granada, about three hundred years ago, when the opinion of the faithful respecting Saint Joseph and the devotion due to him had not been so openly and generally displayed.

11. THE OPINIONS OF OTHER DOCTORS : But the doctors who followed spoke still more clearly. Giovanni di Cartagena, contemporary of Bellarmine and Baronius, and very dear to Pope Pius V for his piety and science, out of the numerous learned homilies, which he wrote, devoted thirteen to the praises of Joseph. After having spoken of the Apostolic Order, he passes on to treat of the Order of the Hypostatic Union, and says that in its kind it is more perfect than the other, and that in this Order the

first place is held by the Humanity of Christ, which is immediately united to the Person of the Word; the second place is held by the Blessed Virgin, who conceived and brought forth the Incarnate Word; the third place is held by Saint Joseph, to whom was committed by God the special care, never given to any other, of feeding, nursing, educating, and protecting a God-made-man! After Caragena come P. Giuseppe Antonio Patrignani, highly praised also by Benedict XIV, who, almost two centuries ago, wrote thus of Saint Joseph: "He, as constituted head of the Family immediately belonging to the service of a God-Man, transcends in dignity all the other saints; wherefore, he is happily established in an Order which is superior to all the other Orders in the Church." We might adduce other doctors of high authority, but we will proceed to consider some of the legitimate consequences, which flow from this doctrine.

- (a) It is an exceeding honour to Joseph to be comprised in the same Order wherein are Jesus Himself, the Son of God, the King of kings, and Mary, Mother of God and Queen of the Universe, to be united with them in the closest relations, and enjoy their most entire confidence. The nobles of the earth deem themselves to be highly honoured in being brought into near association with monarchs of renown, holding the foremost places in their courts, and being the most trusted in their council. What, then shall we say of Joseph, who placed in the Order of the Hypostatic Union, was destined by God, not only to be the first in His court and the closest in His confidence, but even to be the reputed father of the King of kings, to be not only the confidential friend, but the very spouse of the most exalted of all the empresses in the Universe? **Next to the Divine Maternity, no honour in the world is comparable with this.**
- (b) **To be comprised in the Order of the Hypostatic Union implies being, after Jesus and Mary, superior to all the other saints, both of the Old and the New Testament; and, the reason is clear : for, this Order being superior to all the other orders in the church, it follows that, whosoever has a place in this Order, albeit in its lowest grade, as**

Joseph has, ranks before all who are of the apostles, which is the most eminent among them.

- (c) **It follows that Joseph is superior, not in nature, but in dignity, to the angels themselves, since the orders of angels are subject to the Order of the Hypostatic Union, subject to Jesus, their King and their Head, subject to Mary, their Queen;** hence, as the Apostle declares, when the Eternal Father sent His Divine Son upon earth, he commanded all the angels to adore Him. And on account of Jesus, the angels became subject also to Mary and to Joseph : thus, we find them hastening gladly to serve them to warn them, to console them ; and were they not sent expressly from heaven to act as attendants on Joseph, at one time to assure him that his Spouse had conceived the Son of God Himself; at another to make known to him the plot of Herod, so that he might place the Virgin and her Divine Son in safety by flying into Egypt; and, again, to announce to him that now he may joyfully return into the land of Israel.
- (d) **We conclude that Joseph was comprehended in this Order because he was truly head and guardian of this Divine Family. To rule and govern this august family belonged of right to Jesus, who was God. Mary and Joseph, exalted as they were in dignity, were, nevertheless, only creatures; 'but Jesus willed to give an example of the most perfect humility. It was His Will to magnify our saint, and to concede to him this high glory, making him the head and guardian of His Family; so that Joseph had rule and authority over the Son of God Himself and over the very Mother of the Son of God. And Joseph, being thus destined to be the head and guardian of Jesus, the head and guardian of Mary, became, at the same time, the patron and guardian of the Church, which is the Spouse of Jesus and in a manner, the daughter of Mary. Whence Pius IX., of blessed memory, in proclaiming Joseph Patron of the Church, did not so much confer a new title of honour upon him as affirm and declare this his most**

ancient prerogative, which had not before been so expressly promulgated by Holy Church.

- (e) **JOSEPH'S FATHERHOOD DIRECTLY CONFERRED BY THE ETERNAL FATHER AND THE HOLY FAMILY - THE TRINITY ON EARTH :** It follows that Joseph was comprised in that Order and in that Family, by the highest representation which it is possible to conceive, inasmuch as he was made the very representative of the Divine Father, who alone has the right to call Jesus His Son, having begotten Him from all Eternity ; and yet that same God, who by the mouth of Isaiah protested that he would never give His glory to another, that God who, in communicating to the Word and to the Holy Spirit His Divine Essence, does not in any wise communicate to them His Divine Paternity, was so generous to Joseph as to concede to him His Glory, and communicate to him His Name and His Paternity; not actually, for that was impossible, but so that he should be in His place and stead, and should be called the father of Him who was the Divine Word, and that the Word Himself should call Joseph by the sweet name of Father, so that he might with true joy appropriate to himself that passage in Holy Scripture: "I will be to Him a father and He shall be to me a Son". Herein we see manifested the great Love of the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity for our saint and the confidence They reposed in him; for the Eternal Father committed wholly into his charge His well beloved Son; the divine Son delivered Himself entirely to his care and to his will ; the Holy Spirit consigned and committed to him His most Immaculate Spouse; so that this Holy Family, of which Joseph became the head, was another Triad on earth, a resplendent image of the Most Holy Triad in heaven, the Ever-Blessed Trinity : Joseph representing the Eternal Father, Jesus representing and being, in very truth, the Eternal Word, and Mary representing the Eternal Love, the Holy Spirit. This though is borrowed from the new doctors of the Church, St

Francis de Sales. "We may say" - these are his words - "that the Holy Family was a Trinity on Earth, which in a certain way represented the Heavenly Trinity Itself." (Entretien, xix)

- (f) **Finally, it follows that Joseph, in that he was comprised in that sublime Order, superior to that of all the other saints, must, as a natural consequence, have been predestined to receive greater gifts and graces than all the other saints, that he might be made worthy to be so near to Jesus and Mary, and fitted to discharge most faithfully those high ministries to which he was elected. Hence the pious Bernadine de Bustis makes this bold assertion, "Since Joseph was to be the guardian, companion, and ruler of the Most Blessed Virgin and of the Child Jesus, is it possible to conceive that God could have made a mistake in the choice of him, or that He could have permitted him to be deficient in any respect or could have failed to make him most perfect? The very idea would be the grossest of errors. When God selects any one to perform some great work He bestows upon him every virtue needful for its accomplishment. Let us rejoice, then with our most loving Patriarch that he has been exalted to so sublime an order, and has obtained such grace, power, and dignity as none other, after Jesus and Mary, has ever received, to the glory of God, who made him so great, and for our profit and that of the whole Church.**

JOSEPH SANCTIFIED BEFORE BIRTH "We may justly conclude that to Joseph must have been conceded a privilege second only to Hers (Mary's). We have shown what a great end God had in view in the creation of Saint Joseph, who was to be associated with the mystery of the Incarnation, and was thus comprised in the decree of Man's redemption. Hence it is that he was pre-announced in Holy Scripture, and ennobled with so high a genealogy. Now, in order to correspond to so lofty a vocation, which after that of the Virgin Mother, was superior to all others, whether of angels or saints, Joseph must needs have been sanctified in a most eminent degree.

that he might be worthy to take his place in the most sublime Order of the Hypostatic Union, in which Jesus held the first place and Mary the second ...

JOSEPH GIVEN GIFTS GREATER THAN ANY OTHER SAINT: If then, Joseph was elected to such an office, which, after the Divine Maternity, has none to equal it in Heaven or on earth, he must have received of God for its discharge a fullness of corresponding grace, superior to that vouchsafed to any other saint ...

JOSEPH'S SOUL THE ABODE OF THE DIVINE MAJESTY: The grace of the Holy Spirit can have tolerated no delay in him, and, since God had prepared for Joseph the greatest grace of sanctification after Mary, he would not have awaited his birth to take possession of his soul but in virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, who was to be his reputed Son, would have diffused into his heart such a flood of grace even from his mother's womb as to efface every stain of original sin and arrange it with the most splendid gifts, fitting it to be the abode of the Divine Majesty.

THE TWO WAYS JOSEPH MAY HAVE BEEN SANCTIFIED IN HIS MOTHER'S WOMB: There are two ways in which this sanctification might be effected. His beautiful soul at the moment of its infusion into the body might have been guarded from contracting the stain of original sin; or at the second moment, that is, when the stain was scarcely contracted, it might have been instantaneously cancelled and purged by the grace of the future Saviour.

THOSE WHO BELIEVE JOSEPH'S SOUL WAS KEPT FREE FROM ORIGINAL SIN: With regards to the first of these opinion, there have not been wanting pious writers who have held that Joseph was entirely exempt from original sin. The seraphic Bernadine de Bustis, a most devout doctor, who flourished about the middle of the 15th century, and therefore previous to the Council of Trent, says that among the fervent clients of Saint Joseph, some did not hesitate to affirm that solely for the sake of Jesus, of whom he was to be the putative father, and of Mary, of whom he was to be the most pure spouse, he was

not only sanctified in his mother's womb, but, moreover, preserved from contracting original sin. A century later, Giacomo Lobbezio ... would willingly subscribe to such a belief.

THE SECOND WAY: SANCTIFIED AFTER CONCEPTION: Coming now to the other way in which Joseph's sanctification in his mother's womb may have been effected, namely at the second moment after his conception, as theologians would say ... The mind of the doctors of the church has been so freely expressed on this point that it may be reckoned as a common opinion.

THE GREAT GERSON - HIS OPINION SUPPORTED BY THE CHURCH FATHERS AND THE MOST LEARNED THEOLOGIANS:

Gerson, who was most devout to Saint Joseph, and who exerted himself so vigorously for the extinction of the schism which afflicted the Church during his time, used loudly to assert that in order to remove this tribulation it was above all things necessary to honour and glorify in the highest possible degree the great Patriarch, Saint Joseph.

In the beautiful discourse, which he delivered before the Council of Constance on the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, he made the most splendid eulogium of her holy spouse, Joseph. In this sermon he openly professed that the Blessed Virgin was by a singular privilege prevented by divine grace in such wise as to preserve her from the least stain of original sin, so that she thus crushed the head of the old serpent, without having ever been trodden under foot by him.

Then referring to Joseph, he uses these words: "As Mary before her birth was sanctified in her mother's womb, so may we believe was also her virginal spouse, Joseph," from which observation it might have been concluded that he claimed the same immunity from original sin for Saint Joseph as for the Blessed Virgin, except for the qualification which he subjoined: "although not in an altogether similar manner ..." The similarity and the difference may be noted in this - that Joseph after the contraction of original sin was sanctified in the womb by the Baptism of

Charity, “baptismo flaminis”, as was the Baptist and as others have been ; for so we read in the Jerusalem Office of Saint Joseph. ... This doctrine was preached by Gerson at the Council of Constance, in presence of the very Fathers who had deputed him to place on record the conciliar decrees; and not only had these Fathers not a word to say in opposition, but they greatly applauded his discourse and ordered it to be published, accompanied by a notice that it had been delivered before them. This commendation served to promote the support of the doctrine by the most learned theologians.

ISIDORO OF ISOLANO – 1522: HOLY DOMINICAN AND JOSEPHIAN PROPHET :

Every sanctification of this nature is accorded on account of the future exalted dignity of the sanctified, or is ordained with a special reference to the Saint of Saints. ... If Jeremiah was sanctified before his birth because he was to prophesy expressly of Jesus, and the Baptist also because he was to point Him out present among men, who can suppose that Joseph, on account of the close knowledge he had of Jesus, above all others, Mary alone excepted, and his paternal education of Him, was not also similarly privileged? ... This, he adds, was also befitting the parity of the marriage between the Blessed Virgin and Saint Joseph. Saint Joseph, then we see, is always, in the opinion of the Doctors of the church, held to be, next to the Blessed Virgin, the purest and the most holy among creatures, and worthy, for the sake of the divine Son and His Mother, to be liberated and purged from original sin immediately after his conception. And this doctrine, expressed by great doctors, and tacitly approved by the Church - a doctrine become familiar to preachers in their pulpits, to theologians in their academies, and to sacred writers in their works may be considered as generally held and believed by devout Christians.

THREE BASIC TRUTHS OF HOLY FAMILY LIFE ACCORDING TO SAINT FRANCIS DE SALES

And finally to a contemporary son of Joseph, Father Andrew Doze in whose book *Discovering Saint Joseph* we find a portrait

so profoundly stirring. Woven from the insights of the saints and great mystics of the Church, are his own unique insights. Commenting on the thoughts of one of Saint Joseph's illustrious sons, Saint Francis de Sales, Father Doze draws three basic truths validating devotion to Saint Joseph.

1. **LIVING IN THE SHADOW OF THE HOLY MARRIAGE OF MARY AND JOSEPH** "Jesus was begotten *in the shadow of the holy marriage* of Joseph and Mary. The work of the Holy Spirit which traditionally corresponds to this '*Shadow*', assumes a concrete form expressly willed by God: Mary must live in Joseph's home. Mary gives birth in the *shadow* of Joseph ... Our entire research and meditation, our entire life should be turned uniquely toward this blessed *shadow*, the only source and secret of Christ's Humanity." (Indeed our Holy Father John Paul II has done just that in his wonderful treatise "The Theology of the Body" which is a text for special meditation if we want to grow into Holy Family Life understanding its Spousal Gift)
2. **TO LIVE IN THE HOLY FAMILY SIMPLICITY, JOY AND FAITH** "Since Saint Joseph's shadow is the condition for the begetting of Jesus, it is also the condition for our spiritual begetting. To live within the Holy Family precisely means to find again the concrete demands which correspond to this kinship. It is there and there alone that Christ wants to see us grow spiritually with Him."
3. **TO LIVE IN OBEDIENCE TO SAINT JOSEPH.** "Everything here obeys Joseph. He is in charge of providing the soul with the first and most indispensable of blessings: Peace of heart. Without it nothing is possible. **Saint Francis de Sales** said to the Visitandine sisters - "*You know I have always sought to instill in the uppermost part of your memory, this holy equanimity of the mind as the most necessary and special virtue of religion.*" Now, where does the Peace of the Holy Family come from? From obedience to Saint Joseph, this mysterious man who is, as it were, directly connected to the Father. (Saint Francis de Sales adds) "*Our Lord did not want to govern*

Himself but to let Himself be carried wherever and by whomever others wished." (even as He continues to do so in the Blessed Sacrament). As for Our Lady, *the angel does not speak to Her* (in respect of the Flight in to Egypt) ... *"She takes no offence because the angel speaks to Joseph ... She simply obeys because She knows that God has so ordered. She does not ask why, but it is enough for Her that God wishes it so, and that He takes pleasure in the fact that we submit ourselves without any second thoughts. When one is submitted to Joseph as to the Eternal Father, the most trying circumstances do not erode the Peace and the most unheard of turnabouts become possible. Let it suffice us to know that God wants us to obey without toying with the idea of assessing those we must obey."* In astonishing wording which does not appear in the final edition of the *Treatise* but which corresponds exactly to what he thought, to what he was living in depth. In the day to day living, it is by learning the absolutely special art of obeying Joseph that, like Jesus, we fulfill the Will of the Eternal Father."

Another great son of Joseph, "**Monsieur Jean-Jacques Olier** received the blessing of Saint Francis de Sales just before he died at age 55. According to St Francis's prophecy, Jean-Jacques would fulfill his mission to perfection, by being successful there where so many others had failed. He would be the first to open the seminaries requested by the Council of Trent one century earlier. He would guide the spirit of the Church in depth and direction of which today we must rediscover the exact secret:- the art (supremely difficult) of *becoming childlike*, since this is the condition to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. How are we to do that if not by imitating Jesus by being a 'Child' like Him, between Joseph and Mary?" He believes that Joseph had a kind of beauty and wisdom that knew no limitations since he was Christ's guardian on earth.

*"The Son of God, having made Himself visible by taking on human flesh, conversed and visibly dealt with God His Father, in the person of Saint Joseph, by whom the Father made Himself visible to Him." **The Holy Family was a heaven, a paradise on earth, endless delights in this place of grief. It was a Glory***

already begun in the vileness, abjection and lowliness of Their Life. Jesus! I am not surprised that You remained thirty whole years in this House without leaving Saint Joseph. I am not surprised that you are inseparable from his person. His House alone is a paradise for You and his House is for You the bosom of Your Father from Whom you are inseparable and in Whom you take Your Eternal Delights. Outside this House, you find only deadly objects, only sinners, these unfortunate causes of Your Death ... Jesus saw in him (Joseph) the Eternal Father as His father and the most blessed Virgin saw in his person the same Eternal Father of whom She was the Bride.”

This wonderful son of Joseph restored seminary life in Europe by living the spirit of the Child Jesus entrusting all to Mary and Joseph. In our own time when seminary life is threatened with all manner of dangers, and indeed the very 'smoke of Satan' has entered this school of priesthood, **Monsieur Olier's recipe for success should be of particular interest to seminary directors, who are training men in what is the particular vocation of Saint Joseph, the Virgin Begetting of Christ.** Priests, who are to beget Christ in souls virginally, surely cannot hope to succeed without the guidance of Saint Joseph.

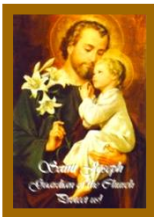
Our Blessed Mother, the other patron of Monsieur Olier's seminary, being Mother of Christ, the true High Priest, is with Joseph indispensable in the formation of the priestly character. Once again we reflect that those who have had great success in establishing seminary and religious life have entrusted all to Mary and Joseph and the *Shadow* of Their Virginal Nuptials in which all Unity and Peace is found - Jesus. Consider e.g. the wonderfully swift establishment of Saint Teresa's Carmels founded on this spirituality.

Saint Teresa of Avila, entrusted the Order of her Reformed Carmels to Saint Joseph - the first Convent in Avila was that of Saint Joseph. The Lord Himself directed her to do so! Beginning her new vocation at the age of 45 she is an example to all of us who desire to leave the world of moderation, of the lukewarm practice of our Faith which urges Jesus to *spit us out of His mouth* (Revelation 3 : 16) and enter that deeper Love that

embraces the Cross with passion for the sake of souls. The visionary experience which affirmed Saint Teresa in her courageous undertaking and which is depicted in a beautiful painting in St Joseph's Avila is this, as retold by John Haffert, co-founder of the Blue Army, now the World Apostolate of Fatima.

When St Teresa founded the first monastery of a reformed Carmel, Our Lord said: "I wish it to be dedicated under the name of Saint Joseph. This Saint will be your guard at one of the doors, the Blessed Virgin at the other, while I shall be in your midst." At another time Saint Teresa found herself in the church of the Dominican Fathers and she felt someone place a beautiful white cloak upon her shoulders. For a few moments she did not see who placed it there, but very soon she saw the Blessed Virgin and Her holy spouse, Saint Joseph. The saint felt a great joy within her heart. Mary spoke, and while Saint Teresa listened to that heavenly Voice, she thought that she pressed Our Lady's hand in her own. "I am so pleased that you have consecrated yourself to Saint Joseph" Our Lady told Carmel's daughter, "that you may ask anything for your convent with perfect certainty that you shall receive it". The two holy Spouses then placed a precious stone of great value in Saint Teresa's hands, and left the saint inundated with the purest joy and the most ardent desire to be consumed entirely with the violence of Divine Love."

The Scapulars of Carmel and St Joseph united with ecclesiastical approval effect this above request from Heaven. Please contact the supplier of this book should you want scapulars.



While it is important for the Church to profess the Virginal Conception of Jesus, it is no less important to uphold Mary's Marriage to Joseph, because juridically Joseph's fatherhood depends on it. At the culmination of the history of salvation, when God reveals His Love for humanity through the Gift of the Word, it is precisely the Marriage of Mary and Joseph that brings to realization in full "freedom" the "Spousal Gift of self" in receiving and expressing such a Love ... Joseph and Mary are the summit from which holiness spreads all over the earth.

"Guardian of the Redeemer" - paragraph 7 - Pope St John Paul II

The two 'doors' and two 'hands'

Father Doze comments, "All is said here: this world of God, the antithesis of hell is **Joseph's world. It has two Doors:** the first, the entrance door, the one on the street, is entrusted to Joseph. It allows one to leave a complicated, confused, hostile and dangerous world behind. The other is the mysterious door, Mary's door that ancient devotion called "Gate of Heaven", through which Jesus enters into the world, in a very special way. Everything happens as if the Lord was presenting Himself between these two Doors in the same way that the Eternal Father presents Himself, according to **Saint Irenaeus**, between '*his two hands which are the Son and the Spirit*'. **The Son imitates the Father: He also has two hands:** Joseph by whom he pulls us away from this ambiguous world, this Babylon where people think they all speak the same language while no one understands his brother, and Mary, by whom the Son inaugurates the New World, that of Pentecost, where each one speaks his own language, is respected in his uniqueness, but where everyone understands everyone else? We must go through the first door so that the Spirit of the Father Who comes through the second might reveal the Son to us. (Lk 10:22) "*No one comprehends what is truly God's except the Spirit of God*" (1Cor 2:11).



At the age of 52, St Teresa introduced to the world of her Reform, the twenty four year old **St John of the Cross**. No one was to describe the art of becoming a son of Joseph as he. Indeed, as one reflects upon this, one sees that these rare and striking works, “The Ascent of Mount Carmel” and ”The Dark Night of the Soul”, are but the most precise description, the most irreplaceable one there is of the

descent from Jerusalem to Nazareth. John of the Cross places his genius and his holiness at the service of this transfer of human reason, much challenged by the snares and the enticements of the world, to this totally different world of faith. In other words, he teaches, with the authority of a master, the art of entering into Joseph’s home in Nazareth.”

(“*Discovering St Joseph*” by Father Andrew Doze – theologian and Chaplain at Lourdes)

JOSEPH’S AVE

Hail Joseph, Image of God the Father, The Lord is with you with Mary, blessed are you among all men and blessed is the fruit of your Fiat, Jesus! Holy Joseph, father to God and Spouse of the Immaculate Conception generate their divine Life in us. Amen!

A LITANY OF PRAISE FOR SAINT JOSEPH

Hail Joseph! Image of God the Father,
Marrying the Immaculate Conception!

Hail Joseph! Image of God the Father,
Generating in Her the Life of Christ!

Hail Joseph! Image of God the Father,
Nursing in your arms the Word made Flesh,

Tenderly as Your Son!

Hail Joseph! Image of God the Father,
Receiving all the honour, love and devotion
From your Son, Jesus!

Hail Joseph! Image of God the Father,
Sorrowfully bearing in your heart
The pains of the rejected God!

Hail Joseph! Image of God the Father,
Protecting and providing for the outcast God,
Refugee in this world, living among idolators!

Hail Joseph! Image of God the Father,
Letting your 'sun' shine on good and bad alike.

Hail Joseph! Image of God the Father,
Feeding all creatures!

Hail Joseph! Image of God the Father,
Generating Jesus' Life in souls!

Hail Joseph! Image of God the Father,
Tenderly caring for your Virgin Souse
As Christ does His Church!

Hail Joseph! Image of God the Father,
Generating the New Creation in the Father's Will!

Hail Joseph! Image of God the Father,
Possessing the Holy Spirit's Divine Love!

Hail Joseph! Image of God the Father,
Possessing the Divine Will and doing all the Acts of the
Eternal Father in It!

Hail Joseph! Image of God the Father,
Possessing all the Fruits of Divine Love!

Hail Joseph! Image of God the Father,
Directing all the Acts of Jesus and Mary!

Hail Joseph! Father/Guardian of the Kingdom of God
In Jesus and Mary!

Hail Joseph! Father/Guardian of all the Acts of the King and
Queen of Heaven and Earth!

Hail Joseph! Father/Guardian of all the Acts of Luisa and all
the 'divine lives' given birth through her!

Hail Joseph! Father/Guardian of all the Acts of all the
'divine lives' generated through the Humanity of Jesus!

*Holy Joseph, chosen by our Eternal Father to be
the father of His Beloved Son on earth and virgin
spouse of His beloved Daughter, Mary, I entrust to
you my life in the Divine Will that I may never exit
from this Sanctuary of all the Acts of the
Humanities of Jesus, Mary and Luisa. I give you
the key of my human will to never return it to me
and I entrust to you all the fruits of this life and
ask you to give me the grace of a happy death fully
alive with the radiance of the Divine Will. Be
always a father to me and correct all in me that is
not Will of our Father. Amen! Fiat!*



Bibliography:

THE JERUSALEM BIBLE

- Darton, Longman and Todd Ltd - 1974

DISCOVERING SAINT JOSEPH

- Father Andrew Doze - Saint Paul Publications 1991

CUSTODIAN OF THE REDEEMER

- Pope St John Paul II – Apostolic Letter 15 August, 1989

SAINT JOSEPH - As Seen by Mystics and Historians

- 101 Foundation, Inc, PO Box 151 Asbury, NJ 08802 - -151

JOSEPH - THE MAN CLOSEST TO CHRIST:

Francis I Filas, S.J. - Saint Paul Editions 1962

A MANUAL OF PRACTICAL DEVOTIONS TO ST

JOSEPH Fr Patrignani, S.J. Tan Books and publishers, Inc. 1982

THE LIFE AND GLORIES OF SAINT JOSEPH -

Edward Healy Thompson, M.A. - Tan Books - originally publ 1888

THE THEOLOGY OF THE BODY

- Pope John Paul II - Daughters of Saint Paul - 1997

THE LIFE OF SAINT JOSEPH

- Maria Cecilia Baij, O.S.B. (1743 - 1766) -101 Foundation - 1997

THE CITY OF GOD

- Mary of Agreda - translated from the original Spanish by Fiscar Marison - Ave Maria Institute Washington, New Jersey

JOYS AND SORROWS OF SAINT JOSEPH

The Irish Messenger - Dublin - 30 March, 1936

SIGN OF HER HEART

John Haffert – 1940 – Ave Maria Institute

BROWN SCAPULAR OF MOUNT CARMEL

Father Barry Bossa, S.A.C – A.M.I. Press, Washington

THE SCAPULAR OF CARMEL

Father E.K. Lynch, O.Carm. – Printed in U.S.A. by the Blue Army Of Our Lady of Fatima, Washington, N.J., 07882