

Novena to Saint Joseph

Day Nine: Patron of a Happy Death



Saint Joseph, how fitting it was that at the hour of your death Jesus should stand at your bedside with Mary, the sweetness and hope of all mankind. You gave your entire life to the service of Jesus and Mary; at death you enjoyed the consolation of dying in Their loving arms. You accepted death in the spirit of loving submission to the Will of God, and this acceptance crowned your hidden life of virtue. Yours was a merciful judgment, for your foster-Son, for whom

you had cared so lovingly, was your Judge, and Mary was your advocate. The verdict of the Judge was a word of encouragement to wait for His coming to Limbo, where He would shower you with the choicest fruits of the Redemption, and an embrace of grateful affection before you breathed forth your soul into eternity.

You looked into eternity and to your everlasting reward with confidence. If our Savior blessed the shepherds, the Magi, Simeon, John the Baptist, and others, because they greeted His presence with devoted hearts for a brief passing hour, how much more did He bless you who have sanctified yourself for so many years in His company and that of His Mother? If Jesus regards every corporal and spiritual work of mercy, performed in behalf of our fellow men out of love for Him, as done to Himself, and promises heaven as a reward, what must have been the extent of His gratitude to you who in the truest sense of the word have received Him, given Him shelter, clothed, nourished, and consoled Him at the sacrifice of your strength and rest, and even your life, with a love which surpassed the love of all fathers.

God really and personally made Himself your debtor. Our Divine Savior paid that debt of gratitude by granting you many graces in your lifetime, especially the grace of growing in love, which is the best and most perfect of all gifts. Thus, at the end of your life your heart became filled with love, the fervor and longing of which your frail body could not resist. Your soul followed the triumphant impulse of your love and winged its flight from earth to bear the prophets and patriarchs in Limbo the glad tidings of the advent of the Redeemer.

Saint Joseph, I thank God for your privilege of being able to die in the arms of Jesus and Mary. As a token of your own gratitude to God, obtain for me the grace of a happy death. Help me to spend each day in preparation for death. May I, too, accept death in the spirit of resignation to God's Holy Will, and die, as you did, in the arms of Jesus, strengthened by Holy Viaticum, and in the arms of Mary, with her rosary in my hand and her name on my lips!

Saint Joseph, I, your unworthy child, greet you. You are the faithful protector and intercessor of all who love and venerate you. You know that I have special confidence in you and that, after Jesus and Mary, I place all my hope of salvation in you, for you are especially powerful with God and will never abandon your faithful servants. Therefore, I humbly invoke you and commend myself, with all who are dear to me and all that belong to me, to your intercession. I beg of you, by your love for Jesus and Mary, not to abandon me during life and to assist me at the hour of my death.

Glorious Saint Joseph, spouse of the Immaculate Virgin, obtain for me a pure, humble, charitable mind, and perfect resignation to the divine Will. Be my guide, my father, and my model through life that I may merit to die as you did in the arms of Jesus and Mary.

Loving Saint Joseph, faithful follower of Jesus Christ, I raise my heart to you to implore your powerful intercession in obtaining from the Divine Heart of Jesus all the graces necessary for my spiritual and temporal welfare, particularly the grace of a happy death, and the special grace I now implore:

(Mention your request).

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

MEMORARE

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