



Novena to Saint Joseph - Day One: Foster Father of Jesus

Saint Joseph, you were privileged to share in the mystery of the Incarnation as the foster-father of Jesus. Mary alone was directly connected with the fulfillment of the mystery; in that she gave her consent to Christ's conception and allowed the Holy Spirit to form the sacred humanity of Jesus from her blood. You had a part in this mystery in an indirect manner, by fulfilling the condition necessary for the Incarnation —

the protection of Mary's virginity before and during your married life with her. You made the virginal marriage possible, and this was a part of God's plan, foreseen, willed, and decreed from all eternity.

In a more direct manner, you shared in the support, upbringing, and protection of the Divine Child as His foster-father. For this purpose, the Heavenly Father gave you a genuine heart of a father — a heart full of love and self-sacrifice. With the toil of your hands, you were obliged to offer protection to the Divine Child, to procure for Him food, clothing, and a home. You were truly the saint of the holy childhood of Jesus — the living created providence which watched over the Christ-Child.

When Herod sought the Child to put Him to death, the Heavenly Father sent an angel but only as a messenger, giving orders for the flight; the rest He left entirely in your hands. It was that fatherly love which was the only refuge that received and protected the Divine Child. Your fatherly love carried Him through the desert into Egypt until all enemies were removed. Then on your arms the Child returned to Nazareth to be nourished and provided for during many years by the labor of your hands. Whatever a human son owes to a human father for all the benefits of his up-bringing and support, Jesus owed to you, because you were to Him a foster-father, teacher, and protector.

You served the Divine Child with a singular love. God gave you a heart filled with heavenly, supernatural love — a love far deeper and more powerful than any natural father's love could be.

You served the Divine Child with great unselfishness, without any regard to self-interest, but not without sacrifices. You did not toil for yourself, but you seemed to be an instrument intended for the benefit of others, to be put aside as soon as it had done its word, for you disappeared from the scene once the childhood of Jesus had passed.

You were the shadow of the Heavenly Father not only as the earthly representative of the authority of the Father, but also by means of your fatherhood — which only appeared to be natural — you were to hide for a while the divinity of Jesus. What a wonderfully sublime and divine vocation was yours — the loving Child which you carried in your arms, and loved and served so faithfully, had God in Heaven as Father and was Himself God!

Yours is a very special rank among the saints of the Kingdom of God, because you were so much a part of the very life of the Word of God made Man. In your house at Nazareth and under your care the redemption of mankind was prepared. What you accomplished; you did for us. You are not only a powerful and great saint in the Kingdom of God, but a benefactor of the whole of Christendom and mankind. Your rank in the Kingdom of God, surpassing far in dignity and honor of all the angels, deserves our very special veneration, love, and gratitude.

Saint Joseph, I thank God for your privilege of having been chosen by God to be the foster-father of His Divine Son. As a token of your own gratitude to God for this your greatest privilege, obtain for me the grace of a very devoted love for Jesus Christ, my God, and my Savior. Help me to serve Him with some of the self-sacrificing love and devotion which you had while on this earth with Him. Grant that through your intercession with Jesus, your foster-Son, I may reach the degree of holiness God has destined for me and save my soul.

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.