

worship of our heavenly Father. May fathers provide firm and clear standards of Christian behaviour to their families in a society that is losing its spiritual foundations.

[say the Daily Novena Prayer](#)

8th Day - Joseph the Workman

Matt. 13.55: "Isn't he the carpenter's son?" In Mark's Gospel we read of how the people said of Jesus "Is this not the carpenter?" He learned his trade from Joseph, who must surely have been as diligent at his work as he was at his religious duties. He knew the dignity of work, the "homage of work" (Vat. II) - that makes man's efforts part of the redemptive work of Jesus himself. He probably also knew the evil of unemployment; there would be times of hardship in Nazareth when people had no money to give work to Joseph and Jesus.

Modern man tends to view work only as a means of making money; too often work is thought of as a means to satisfy one's instincts of greed. The machine has taken over from the craftsman. There is little sense of pride in workmanship. Let us ask St. Joseph to help us see our work as service for others, as a sharing in the work of

redemption; a means of bringing order and beauty out of chaos, a means of making our world a better place.

[say the Daily Novena Prayer](#)

9th Day - Joseph-Man of Loving Service

Matt. 24.45: "Who is the faithful and far-sighted servant whom the master has put in charge of his household to dispense food at need?"

The Jewish ideal man was someone who was "righteous", someone who actively obeyed God's word, who did his will. Joseph acted instantly when he knew God's will. His was a life of loving service. He served his family, he served his village neighbours, he served his God. No wonder Christian piety has imagined his "happy death" in the presence of Jesus and Mary.

May St. Joseph's example and intercession help us to grow in loving service in our families, in our places of work, in all our relationships. May we learn to "wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ", and may we share one day in the loving service of the heavenly banquet in the Kingdom of Heaven. [say the Daily Novena Prayer](#)

Daily Novena Prayer

Almighty God, you have chosen Saint Joseph to be the mainstay of Jesus and Mary, the wise and faithful servant in whom they could trust. We pray that he may truly be the guardian of your Church; that he may inspire with confidence those who are devoted to him; that he may give security to those who work in the vineyard of Your Son; and finally, that he may be a source of strength to us, who wish, like him, to dedicate ourselves to Christ's service, now and in times to come. Amen.



Novena to St Joseph

O St. Joseph, foster father of our Lord Jesus Christ and true spouse of Mary the Virgin, pray for us.

1st Day - Joseph the Just Man

Matt.1.19: "Joseph was a man who always did what was right."

What a predicament Joseph was in when he discovered that Mary had conceived. What was he to do? But he "always did the right thing", he was a man of God, a just man.

God would show him what was to be done, he trusted in God's guidance - and God did show him the way.

We are often in a state of uncertainty as to what will be the right thing to do. We fret and worry, and blame God for allowing this or that to happen to us. Pray that like Joseph we will put our problems before the Lord and learn from him what is the right thing for us to do.

[say the Daily Novena Prayer](#)

2nd Day - Joseph the Man who Listened

Prov.2.9: "If you listen to me, you will know what is right, just."

Joseph was a man who listened. No spoken word is recorded of him. He was able to hear God's word; he knew how to be silent so as to allow God's word to come through to him.

In our world today we are surrounded by noise and distraction. Our spiritual "senses" become deadened by the intrusive noises of radio and television, of vehicles and planes. Is it any wonder we don't hear God speaking to us? Let us ask St. Joseph to help us to know how to be silent before God, how we can carve out a "quiet time" in our day.

[say the Daily Novena Prayer](#)

3rd Day - Joseph the Man of Vision

Matt. 1.20; 2.13; 19.22: "The angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph."

Joseph was a man of dreams, a man of vision. His life was "ordinary", yet he realised that God could work in extraordinary ways even in his life, in his village.

Our lives too seem very ordinary. But every one of us is special before God. God has a plan for each of us. He wants to use us in his plan to make his Kingdom come. Let us ask St. Joseph to help us be alive to God's wonderful working in our lives.

[say the Daily Novena Prayer](#)

4th Day - Joseph the Missionary

Matt. 2.14: "Joseph got up and took the child and his mother and left that night for Egypt."

The Gospel tells us that Joseph took Mary and the child to a pagan land. St. Hilary, one of the early Fathers of the Church, said St. Joseph is the "model of the apostles". The apostle's, the missionary's task is to take the good news of Christ and his mother to the unevangelized.

The missionary of today is the bearer of the same Good News. Every Christian is called to share in the mission of the Church, at home and in lands afar. Let us ask St. Joseph to help us to know how we can bring Christ into the lives of people, especially those who are most disadvantaged.

[say the Daily Novena Prayer](#)

5th Day - Joseph the Family Man

Micah 5.2: "Bethlehem. . . out of you I will bring a ruler for Israel, whose family goes back to ancient times."

Lk. 2.4: "Joseph went . . . to David's town of Bethlehem-because he was a descendant of David."

Joseph was a descendant of the Royal Family of David. Yet he lived in comparative obscurity and was a "nobody in the world's eyes. He faced difficult family problems: Mary's pregnancy, the threat to the life of the child, the exile to a foreign land; how to make ends meet from the work of his hands. And then, what was he to make of the forewarning that the boy Jesus was marked out for glory and suffering?

Let us ask St. Joseph to protect our families as he did his own. May he help us to discern God's hand in the ups and downs of family life. May he help us with our financial problems, so that we don't allow money or material things to spoil the bond that unites us as a family.

[say the Daily Novena Prayer](#)

6th Day - Joseph-Man of Prayer

Lk. 2.41: "Every year the parents of Jesus went to Jerusalem for the Passover Festival."

Joseph as head of the family observed the religious festivities with his family. He would attend the synagogue in Nazareth on the Sabbath, and go up to the Temple for the major feasts. But he also would have prayed at meals, at certain hours of the day; he would have used words like "alleluia", "hosanna", "amen"; he would

have prayed and sung the Psalms. In the silence of his prayer time he would have known that God spoke to him.

We are all called to be people of prayer. We can't be content with where we are in our prayer life there is so much more for us. We need to enter more deeply into the prayer of the Church in the Liturgy, we need to make more meaningful our daily prayer practices, we need to listen to God in prayer. May St. Joseph help us to grow up more as people of prayer.

[say the Daily Novena Prayer](#)

7th Day - Joseph-Teacher of Jesus

Matt. 1.25: "And Joseph named him Jesus."

Name-giving was something very solemn and significant in the Bible. "To know someone's name was to have access to the mystery of his being." Joseph, "the man closest to Jesus" must, like Mary, have pondered deeply on this remarkable child. Yet Joseph as head of his household had the task of teaching Jesus his prayers, taking him to sit with the men in the synagogue, introducing him to the Scriptures, presiding over his "coming of age" (bar mitzvah) at 13, teaching him the various rituals of the devout Jew.

In our days many fathers of families have lost their sense of place in the family; many provide weak leadership, especially in the area of religious practice. We must pray that the example of Joseph will inspire Christian fathers to assume their rightful role of leading their children in