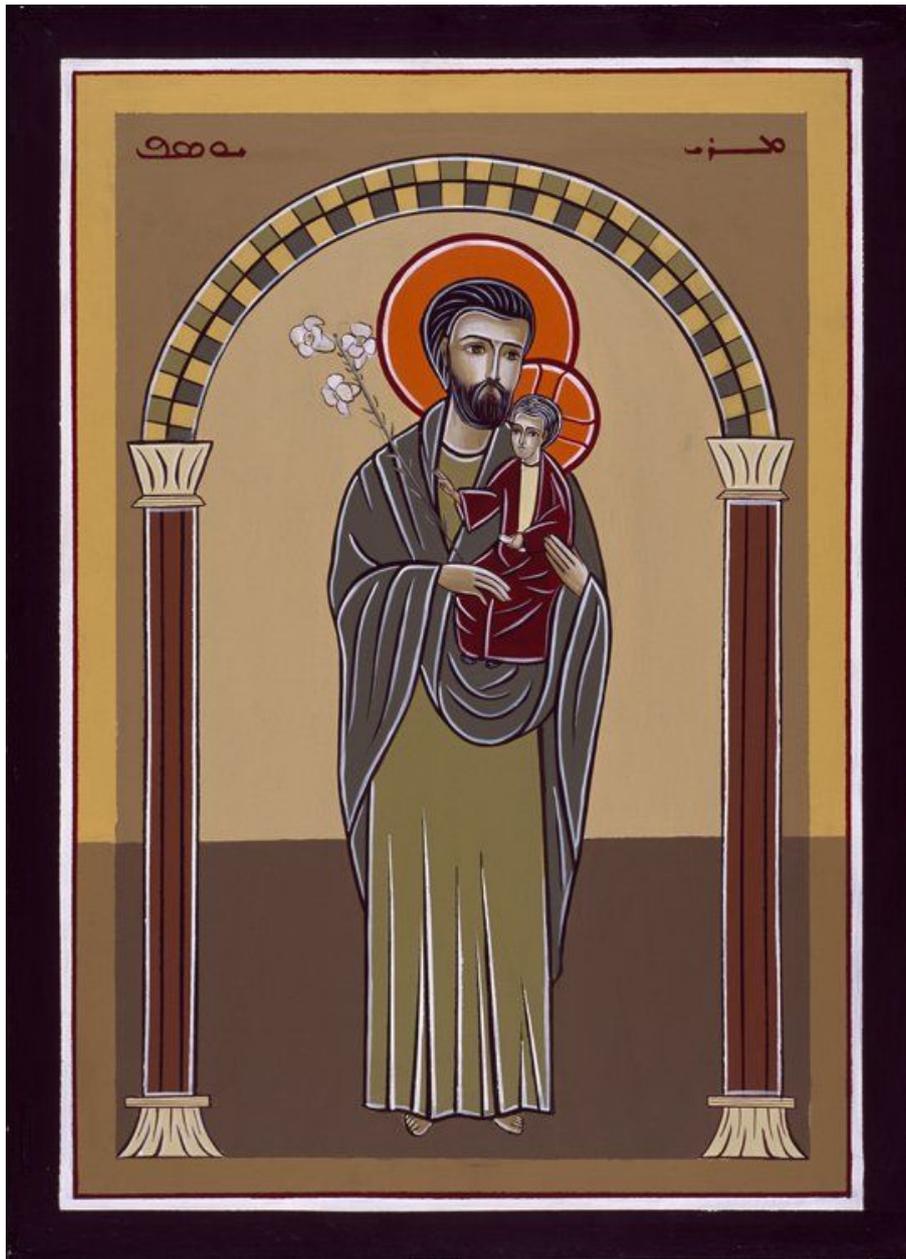


# Novena to Saint Joseph



For Use in the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles

**Prayers of Pope Francis to Saint Joseph  
For the Year of Saint Joseph 2021**

Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,  
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.  
To you God entrusted his only Son;  
in you Mary placed her trust; with you Christ became man.  
Blessed Joseph, to us too, show yourself  
a father and guide us in the path of life.  
Obtain for us grace, mercy, and courage,  
and defend us from every evil.  
Amen.

Glorious Patriarch Saint Joseph,  
whose power makes the impossible possible,  
come to my aid in these times of anguish and difficulty.  
Take under your protection the serious and troubling situations  
that I commend to you, that they may have a happy outcome.  
My beloved father, all my trust is in you.  
Let it not be said that I invoked you in vain,  
and since you can do everything with Jesus and Mary,  
show me that your goodness is as great as your power. Amen.

## Opening Prayer

O Lord, open my mouth that I may bless Your Holy Name.  
Cleanse my heart, driving out all wicked and worldly thoughts.  
Enlighten my mind that I may exercise this devotion in a dignified,  
attentive, and devout manner, so as to obtain the graces I need and  
live a holy life for the glory of Your majesty. I ask this through Christ  
our Lord. Amen.



## Prayer for the Day

### First Day

The man nearest to Christ Jesus was His foster father, Joseph the carpenter. John the Baptist saw Christ briefly near the Jordan and knew that his work as Precursor was over. The Apostles lived and worked with Christ during the brief days of His public life.

But Joseph presided over the events of Christ's Infancy, provided for Him the house that sheltered Him from birth to baptism, and was of all the men of earth the one at whose hands Jesus received most in service and love and unselfish devotion.

Born of a royal life, Joseph was a carpenter. That trade he passed on to his foster Son. Joseph was destined to immortal honors of the Church, yet no spoken word of his is recorded in the Scriptures.

Still the Church with good reason cries out, "Go to Joseph." This injunction we confidently obey as we pray:

O God, who in your ineffable providence was pleased to choose blessed Joseph for the spouse of your most Holy Mother, grant we ask you, that we may be worthy to have him for our intercessor in heaven whom we venerate as our protector on earth. Who lives and reigns, world without end. Amen.

Our Father... Hail Mary.... Glory Be...

## Second Day

There is always a cause for the choices God makes. Out of the long professional men through history, God selected Joseph to be the husband of Mary and the protector of the Savior.

Joseph's youth was one of stainless virtue. His young manhood was marked by deep religious faith and a burning desire to see the Savior of Israel. His was a life of honest work and a humility that fitted him for his part in the hidden life of the Savior.

Little did he dream as he visited the synagogue on the Sabbath that someday he would be the protector of the synagogue's God. Little did he understand that the trade of carpenter that he was learning would be the means by which he would provide food and clothing for the world's maker, would be the trade that he would teach the creator of the universe.

Without knowing what it was that he was getting ready for, he gave to his simple jobs the full devotion and the full strength of a character of a simple, honest man.

In these ordinary ways did he fit himself for the extraordinary assignment that God would give him. Remember this splendid man, who walked the simple ways, we pray:

O God, who in your ineffable providence was pleased to choose blessed Joseph for the spouse of your most Holy Mother, grant we ask you, that we may be worthy to have him for our intercessor in heaven whom we venerate as our protector on earth. Who lives and reigns, world without end. Amen.

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## Third Day

Tradition has it that Joseph had taken the vow of virginity, renouncing the right to marriage. At any rate, he lived a life of purity. He was stainless among men and pure in the sight of God.

But God in His providence had greater designs for Joseph than mere abstinence. He chose Joseph, the just man, for the delicate mission of sheltering Mary's virginity and at the same time, being her loyal spouse and guardian of the Incarnate Son of God.

Legend tells us that he was selected by a miracle. The barren rod that he held in his hand blossomed with lilies. Perhaps, but surely his soul was bright with joy when he knew that God had given him to be the partner of his life the rose of Sharon, the stainless lily of Israel, the flower among all the flowers in God's garden.

He accepted his bride and his new responsibility with the determination to make her happy, to keep her safe, and in her company to carry out whatever were God's plans for their future.

So Joseph and Mary were married, and they established the holy house of Nazareth. There they lived most exemplary lives.

To this strong and pure protector of Mary we pray:

O God, who in your ineffable providence was pleased to choose blessed Joseph for the spouse of your most Holy Mother, grant we ask you, that we may be worthy to have him for our intercessor in heaven whom we venerate as our protector on earth. Who lives and reigns, world without end. Amen.

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## Fourth Day

Wedded to the loveliest of brides, entering marriage with strong ideals and a trust in God's provident care, Joseph had a right to expect love and security that come with consecrated marriage. While marriage for him was the beginning of high honor, it was also the beginning of a new pain. While it added to his royal dignity, it was also the occasion of poverty, patience, exile, obscurity, confusion, and wonderment.

For at once he found that his virgin bride was with child. What could this possibly mean? He wanted to think her stainless, but what of this clear evidence? He was confused and bewildered, and while it was distasteful to a man of his simple reticence, the law of his people demanded that he put her away. Since Mary herself did nothing to enlighten him (for she was committed by God to secrecy) his confusion gave way to grave doubt, and doubt in turn gave way to firm, honorable resolve to take action.

What a period of suffering and suspense this must have been to Joseph. In His own good time, God would reveal the wonders of the Incarnation of His Divine Son. But to prepare his soul for so great a miracle, God chose to cleanse his heart in suffering.

Remember his trial and suffering, we pray:

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## **Fifth Day**

Pain and patience in the service of Christ and His Mother soon turn to joy. The visit of the angel brought an end to Joseph's problems. The child whom the lovely Mary carried was the Son of the Most High. He had no earthly Father, for God Himself was His Father. The Holy Spirit had brought the wonder in Mary's body.

Over Joseph, there came in a rush the realization of what his marriage meant. He among all men of earth was to be the guardian of the Mother of the Savior. Upon him would rest the responsibility to protect the Christ Child, to provide His time, to watch over his childhood, to lead Him into the safe maturity that would be the prelude to His public life.

The home? Joseph had only the house of the carpenter to offer. The food of the Son of God would be plain. The clothes He wore would be those of a laborer's child. But Joseph silently vowed that the Christ should never want for a heart to love Him, for hands to serve Him, for feet to run His errands, for a back to shoulder whatever weight God would let him bear.

Joseph and Mary smiled upon each other and together waited for the coming of the Son of God, the Savior of the world. To Joseph, guardian of Mary and protector of the Infant Savior, we pray:

O God, who in your ineffable providence was pleased to choose blessed Joseph for the spouse of your most Holy Mother, grant we ask you, that we may be worthy to have him for our intercessor in heaven whom we venerate as our protector on earth. Who lives and reigns, world without end. Amen.

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## Sixth Day

To us, Christmas is a day of uninterrupted joy. To Joseph, it was a day of the brightest light over the deepest shadows, a blazing sky, and a chilly cave; the presence of angels and the cold shoulder of the villagers, faith, and sorrow; intense joy in the Infant and grief that he could give the Infant only a stable and straw, and his ineffectual service.

The story of Joseph and Christmas is dearly familiar to us. It was decreed that they leave the comforts of home and journey to Bethlehem. The doors of the crowded inns were slammed in his face. He quested through the night until he found the cave and prepared it for his bride and for the coming Child. His was the joy of hearing the song of the angels and watching the procession of the first adorers. His was the pain of seeing Mary shiver in the cold darkness and of remembering that they had been forced to leave in Nazareth the cradle that he had made with such loving care.

He was the first sentry in the court of the new king. His first man-at-arms, His prime minister, His treasurer, the faithful disciple of the master, who had yet to speak His first word.

To Joseph at Christmastide, we say:

O God, who in your ineffable providence was pleased to choose blessed Joseph for the spouse of your most Holy Mother, grant we ask you, that we may be worthy to have him for our intercessor in heaven whom we venerate as our protector on earth. Who lives and reigns, world without end. Amen.

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## Seventh Day

Compared to the powerful and important Herod, Joseph was in the eyes of his times a nobody. Yet, as this faithful carpenter and saint made smooth the ways of his Lord, worked for His comfort, and knelt to adore Him, Herod plotted the destruction of this Child, whom he looked upon as a possible rival for his throne.

Herod tried to turn the Magi into messengers of death, but these wise men had a warning from God, through the star-lighted night found their way to the king. Failing this, Herod sent his soldiers out to kill the Child and end the threat to his brief and pitiful power. Another visit of an angel, and Joseph is moving through the night, leading the animal that carries the sacred burden of the Mother and Child.

Eyes alert for danger, staff gripped tightly against possible threat, feet tirelessly striding forward, a few coins in his purse, his locked shop left behind him, Joseph travels the glorious and ignominious road to exile.

But God chose well when He chose this protector of Mother and Son. The journey was safe, the exile comfortable, and the return happy and secure.

To Joseph, guardian of Jesus and Mary in danger and exile, we say:  
O God, who in your ineffable providence was pleased to choose blessed Joseph for the spouse of your most Holy Mother, grant we ask you, that we may be worthy to have him for our intercessor in heaven whom we venerate as our protector on earth. Who lives and reigns, world without end. Amen.

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## **Eight Day**

Wonderful things happened in the long annals of mankind, but none have been more wonderful than what occurred in the little house and shop of Joseph in Nazareth. The earnings of a laborer provided the food for the creator of heaven and earth.

Into the little carpenter shop comes the young Jesus, apprenticed to a trade. Joseph guides the hands that guided the course of the stars; he teaches the maker of sun, stars, and planets the craft of making tables and chairs for peasants and yokes for oxen.

The Trinity looks down to the lovely trinity of earth-Father, Son, and Holy Spirit beautifully mirrored in Joseph, Mary, and Jesus. Modern Christian homes receive their design and pattern from this model. Modern Catholic marriage is here given its lovely example. Childhood learns obedience as the young Jesus obeys the commands of his parents.

The hearts of Mary and Joseph create a union close and dear and intimate and utterly beautiful; together they live and think and plan and work for the Child, who has been given into their keeping. Theirs was a beautiful family.

Remembering the happiness of Joseph in Nazareth, pray:

O God, who in your ineffable providence was pleased to choose blessed Joseph for the spouse of your most Holy Mother, grant we ask you, that we may be worthy to have him for our intercessor in heaven whom we venerate as our protector on earth. Who lives and reigns, world without end. Amen.

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## **Ninth Day**

Death in the days before Christ was often frightening, often terrible. It was left for Joseph to show us for the first time, the perfect way to die. Graciously God let him know that his work was done. Jesus was almost ready to enter His public life; in that, the humble carpenter would play no part.

He obeyed the voice of God in death as he had obeyed the voice in life. But for him, the voice had no terrors. As Joseph lay on his bed, Jesus and Mary were close to him. His head rested on the virgin breast of his untouched bride, His hand rested in the firm grasp of his foster Son, Jesus was speaking gratefully of what Joseph had done for Him. Mary was saying a loving thank you. His thoughts were being lifted up, and up, and up, toward heaven that lay ahead and the glory that comes to those who have done their simple duty well. Jesus and Mary followed their beloved protector to the grave.

In his place in glory, the whole Church has sought him, called him its faithful guardian, and known that from his powerful intercession favors past counting fall upon the world of men and women, whom he regards as his beloved sons and daughters.

To Joseph in Heaven, we say:

O God, who in your ineffable providence was pleased to choose blessed Joseph for the spouse of your most Holy Mother, grant we ask you, that we may be worthy to have him for our intercessor in heaven whom we venerate as our protector on earth. Who lives and reigns, world without end. Amen.

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