

**The Novena of Saint Joseph 10th - 18th March (or any nine consecutive days)
& other Prayers and Devotions in Honour of St. Joseph, Feast 19th March**

The short daily novena prayer is helpful on its own if time constrains you

Also useful for Feast of '**St. Joseph the Worker**' on 1st May.

Introduction:-

Joseph, the silent man of the Gospels, is in the line of the great men of faith of the Old Testament. He is described as a "just man", a righteous man of integrity. He is in the tradition of Abraham who was called by God to "walk before my face and be upright (Gen: 17.1); of Moses who was told to be "entirely sincere", "entirely faithful" (Deut: 18.13). For centuries his place in the story of Jesus was comparatively unnoticed. Gradually, in Catholic tradition, he was recognised as patron of fathers of families, of bursars and procurators, of manual workers, especially carpenters, and of all who desire a holy death (cf. Farmer, Oxford Dictionary of Saints). St. Bernardine of Sienna (d. 1444) wrote of St. Joseph: "He it is who marks the closing of the old testament. In him the dignity of the prophets and patriarchs achieves its promised fulfilment. Moreover, he alone possessed in the flesh what God in his goodness promised to them over and over again Therefore be mindful of us, blessed Joseph, and intercede for us with him whom men thought to be your son."

St. Teresa of Avila (d. 1582) wrote eloquently of St. Joseph in her autobiography: "He who cannot find anyone to teach him to pray, let him take this glorious saint for his master, and he will not wander out of the way." She also recommended the intercession of St. Joseph for our daily needs. "Our Lord would have us understand that as he was subject to St. Joseph in all things during his earthly pilgrimage, so now in Heaven he is ready to grant all his petitions."

St. Joseph's Missionary Society was founded in London in 1866. Cardinal Herbert Vaughan called St. Joseph "Our Father and Founder". Herbert Vaughan was inspired by Joseph's unobtrusive but essential role in the story of salvation. St. Joseph's intercession was sought to obtain the necessary funds for the new missionary society; he was invoked to secure the desired house at Mill Hill that was to become the birthplace of the Society. Cardinal Vaughan promoted devotion to St. Joseph throughout the country and established at St. Joseph's College, Mill Hill, the national shrine to St. Joseph. From the beginning of St. Joseph's Society, lay people were involved as "associates" in this work for the spread of the Gospel. Priests, Brothers, "associates" all look to Joseph for protection, guidance and inspiration.

Credit: St. Joseph's Missionary Society / Mill Hill Missionaries www.millhillmissionaries.co.uk

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Nine Days Prayer in Honour of St. Joseph

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.

Each day has a reflection to which may be added one or more of further prayers

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 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 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 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 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 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 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 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 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 daily novena prayer

9th Day - Joseph, Man of Loving Service

Matt. 24.45: "Who is the faithful and farsighted 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 daily novena prayer

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Prayers / intercessions to St. Joseph

Intercessions #1

Let us pray to God our Father, for from him, all fatherhood in heaven and on earth takes its name.

R. Father, hallowed be your name.

Father, in your Son you revealed to Joseph the mystery kept secret for endless ages:- Help us to acknowledge your Son as God and man.

R. Father, you enabled Joseph to spend his life in your service:- set our minds on your kingdom and your justice before all other things.

R. Father, your will is that every man should accept and answer your call:- by the prayer of Joseph, give us the grace to live in accord with your will.

R. Creator of all things, you have entrusted your work to our hands:- grant that our labours may prove worthy of you.

R. Father, in whom all men live, grant to those who have died new life, through your Son:- with Mary, and Joseph, and all your saints for ever.

R. Our Father

Concluding Prayer

Almighty God, at the beginnings of our salvation, when Mary conceived your Son and brought him forth into the world, you placed them under Joseph's watchful care. May his prayer still help your Church to be an equally faithful guardian of your mysteries, and a sign of Christ to mankind.

(We make our prayer) through our Lord.

Intercessions #2

Whatever we do or say, let us do it in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

R. Lord, hear us.

As Joseph believed what you had told him, and became the guardian of your only Son:- so may we put our faith in you, and receive the fulfilment of your promise.

R. Father, give us that faith which gives substance to our hopes,- and make us certain of realities we do not see.

R. Joseph took the child Jesus into his care, loving and accepting him as his own Son:- May we accept all that God gives us, and care for those entrusted to us.

R. You have given man authority over the work of your hands and invited him to share in your creation:- help us to accept our responsibility by working for your glory and the good of all mankind.

R. Our Father

Concluding Prayer

Lord God and Creator of the universe, you imposed on mankind the law of work. Give us grace, by Saint Joseph's example and at his intercession, to finish the works you give us to do, and to come to the rewards you promise. (We make our prayer) through our Lord.

A short Litany to St. Joseph

Joseph, husband of the Mother of God	Pray for us
Joseph, foster father of the Son of God	Pray for us
Joseph, man of prayer	Pray for us
Joseph, man of faith	Pray for us
Joseph, committed to doing God's will	Pray for us
Joseph, model of workers	Pray for us
Joseph, defender of family life	Pray for us
Joseph, patron of the dying	Pray for us
Joseph, protector of the Church	Pray for us

Prayer to St. Joseph for the Church

Loving husband of Mary, the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God, and foster father of her Son, we turn to you with confidence as we pray for the Church throughout the world.

Watch over the family of God, bought by the precious blood of Christ, as you watched over the Holy Family of Nazareth. You once rescued the Child Jesus from danger of death: protect now his mystical body from the powers of darkness and strengthen it in every trial.

Give it your own courage, in the struggle against evil, and keep it free from sin and error.

Help us to follow your example, that we may live a holy life, die a holy death and so share your joy for ever in heaven.

Prayer to Saint Joseph for the Church and The Holy Father.

Most Powerful Patriarch Saint Joseph, Patron of the Church which has always invoked you in anxiety and trouble, from the exalted seat of your glory, cast a loving glance upon the whole Catholic world. Let your fatherly heart be touched at the sight of the Mystical Spouse and the Vicar of Christ overwhelmed with sorrow and persecuted by powerful enemies. Oh, by the bitter anguish you experienced upon

earth, dry the tears of the Holy Father, defend him, comfort him, intercede for him with the Giver of peace and charity, that, all adversity being removed and all error dissipated, the entire Church may serve God in perfect liberty. Amen!

Prayer to St. Joseph (#2)

Humble and great, just and prudent, chaste and generous, hardworking and prayerful, glorious St. Joseph, patron of the universal Church and my protector, in the same confidence with which I love and venerate you I turn to you, sure of your powerful friendship and of your intercession with him who lived with you for many years in the house at Nazareth, Our Lord Jesus Christ.

God in his goodness chose you as the reliable and prudent guardian of his greatest treasure and gift to mankind, Jesus his Son. With your beloved spouse, Mary his Virgin Mother, you were the one closest to the Saviour. Together you loved him like no one else in the world; you cared for him as a baby, educated him wisely, and worked with him in the silence and hidden-ness of Nazareth. From him you learned Divine Wisdom. You were loved by him with a love which had no equal. In his presence, and in the sweet company of Mary, you closed your eyes, certain of living with them for ever in the house of the Father.

Our glorious patron St. Joseph, generations of saints and sinners have called on you as their protector and intercessor. They have taken you as the model of Christian life, of surrender to the will of God and of humility; as the model of love for Jesus and Mary, of the interior life, of service and faithfulness, of purity and prudence. In you and in Mary we contemplate with admiration all the most noble Christian virtues lived under the gaze of Jesus, and given by the Holy Spirit to all who welcome him and yield to his direction.

Together with so many who look to you with deep friendship and confidence I ask your intercession with the Lord Jesus, the most high Son of God at whose name everything in heaven and on earth kneels down (Phil. 2:1-11).

Ask for me humility, obedience, purity and faithfulness; teach me simplicity, hard work, and wonder at the marvels God does every day; endow me with discernment, respect for the values of a simple holy life like yours, and the discipline of a faithful spiritual life; introduce me to the beauty of interiority, hidden-ness, and of family and community life based on the gospel; help me to love and serve Jesus as you loved and served him; encourage me by your example to grow with him and through him; grant that I too may feel the strong sweet presence of Mary in my life; assist me in carrying out my everyday work with dedication and with all the enthusiasm and faithfulness fitting for someone who wants to spend his life for the Lord (Col. 3:17-23).

Above all, pray that I may receive the grace of humility, the humility which made you great by putting you totally at the disposal of God's will to be used as his instrument in the plan which brought salvation to the whole world. May my senses, my mind, my heart and my whole being be open to his will, so much that even my "dreams", like yours, may be full of his will and of love for Jesus and Mary.
Glorious St. Joseph, I ask the grace that, whenever the Lord of Life should wish, I too may end my earthly pilgrimage with Jesus and Mary by my side, and enjoy their company for ever. Amen

Prayer to St. Joseph (#3) - may be said daily and may also serve as a Novena to be concluded by Holy Communion.

O glorious St. Joseph, you who have the power to render possible, things that are, for us impossible, come to our aid in our present trouble and distress. (*mention your petition here*)

Take this important and difficult affair under your particular protection that it may end happily.

O dear St Joseph, all our confidence is in you. Let it not be said that we would invoke in you vain, and since you are so powerful with Jesus and Mary, show that your goodness equals your power.

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

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Prayer for Missionary Vocations

God our Father, your Son, Our Lord told us to pray and pray often for what we want. We pray to you not for ourselves.

We beg you to give the grace of vocation to young men and women, to give up all and follow the Cross of Christ to the far corners of the world.

May they train to become wise and holy missionaries, ready to bear the heat of the day in the fields of fear and confusion.

May they become the flickering flames for our brothers living in the darkness of oppression and poverty.

Through our prayers and our missionaries May your name be glorified, May the poor have the gospel preached to them, And may our own faith be strengthened.

We commend ourselves and our prayer to the intercession of Our Lady of Vocations, to St. Joseph, our patron, and to Our Blessed Lord, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

Content courtesy of St. Joseph's Missionary Society & Mill Hill Missionaries, St. Joseph's College, Mill Hill, London NW7 4JX. (see 'introduction' at beginning)

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Prayer to St. Joseph the Worker

O glorious St. Joseph, patron and model of all who labour, obtain for me the grace; to work conscientiously, putting the demands of my work before my ever-changing feeling; to work with gratitude and joy, considering it an honour to develop, by means of my work, the gifts God has given me; to work in an orderly manner, with patience and perseverance, without too easily giving in to weariness or difficulties; to work above all, with the purity of intention and with detachment from self, keeping death in mind and the account I will have to give God of time lost, talents and material wasted, of good omitted, of complacency in success - all so fatal to the work of God. "All for Jesus, all through Mary, all after your example", blessed Joseph, such shall be my watchword at my daily work, in life and in death. Amen - - Pope St. Pius X

Alternative version:- Glorious Saint Joseph, model of all who are devoted to labour, obtain for me the grace to work in the spirit of penance in expiation of my many sins; to work conscientiously by placing love of duty above my inclinations; to gratefully and joyously deem it an honour to employ and to develop by labour the gifts I have received from God, to work methodically, peacefully, and in moderation and patience, without ever shrinking from it through weariness or difficulty to work; above

all, with purity of intention and unselfishness, having unceasingly before my eyes death and the account I have to render of time lost, talents unused, good not done, and vain complacency in success, so baneful to the work of God. All for Jesus, all for Mary, all to imitate thee, O patriarch Saint Joseph! This shall be my motto for life and eternity. - Pope Saint Pius X

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Other Prayers to St. Joseph

Saint Teresa of Avila said this about devotion to Saint Joseph: "I wish I could persuade everyone to be devoted to this glorious saint, for I have great experience of the blessings which he can obtain from God. I have never known anyone to be truly devoted to him and render him particular services that did not notably advance in virtue, for he gives very real help to souls who commend themselves to him. For some years now, I think, I have made some request of him every year on his festival and I have always had it granted. If my petition is in any way ill directed, he directs it aright for my greater good."

O thou, whom no one has ever yet invoked in vain, thou, whose power with Our Lord and Our Lady is so great, that it has been truly said, "In Heaven, Joseph commands rather than supplicates," tender father, intercede for me!

St. Joseph, be my advocate with thy Divine Son, Whose foster-father and faithful protector thou were here below. Add to all thy glories, that of gaining the despaired of cause that I confide to thee. I believe, yes, I believe thou canst obtain my deliverance from the troubles that overwhelm me, and the desolation in which my soul is plunged. I have the firm hope that thou wilt neglect nothing in favour of the afflicted who invoke thee.

Humbly prostrate at thy feet, dear St. Joseph, I implore thee to have pity on my tears, cover me with the mantle of thy merciful protection and bless me. Amen.

An Ancient Prayer to Saint Joseph

O St. Joseph, whose protection is so great, so strong, so prompt before the Throne of God, I place in you all my interests and desires. O St. Joseph, do assist me by your powerful intercession and obtain for me from your Divine Son all spiritual blessings through Jesus Christ, Our Lord; so that having engaged here below your Heavenly power I may offer my Thanksgiving and Homage to the most Loving of Fathers. O St. Joseph, I never weary contemplating you and Jesus asleep in your arms. I dare not approach while He reposes near your heart. Press him in my name and kiss His fine Head for me, and ask Him to return the Kiss when I draw my dying breath. St. Joseph, Patron of departing souls, pray for us. Amen

This novena to Saint Joseph, the foster father of Christ, is often distributed on prayer cards with the following text: "This prayer was found in the 50th year of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In 1505, it was sent from the pope to Emperor Charles when he was going into battle. Whoever shall read this prayer or hear it or keep it about themselves shall never die a sudden death or be drowned, nor shall poison take effect on them-neither shall they fall into the hands of the enemy or be burned in any fire or be overpowered in battle. Say for nine mornings for anything you desire. It has never been known to fail, provided that the request is for one's spiritual benefit or for those whom we are praying for."

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Please visit:- **Penzance Catholic Church website:-** www.penzancecatholicchurch.org