

THE MONTH OF ST. JOSEPH

WEEK 3

MARCH 3 - FIFTEENTH DAY

SAINT JOSEPH, MODEL OF THE HIDDEN LIFE

Sancte Joseph, caput nobilzssitnee et sanctissimee families, ora Pro nobis.

St. Joseph, head of the noblest and holiest of families, pray for us.

THE hidden life is fast becoming unknown, and every day we see less of it. Would that devotion to St. Joseph might bring persons to the practice of this life ! The first cause detrimental to a hidden life is the aversion entertained by children for the occupation of parents, and the desire to withdraw themselves from their parental protection.

FIRST POINT: Let us contemplate the Holy Family of Nazareth ; behold Jesus choosing His father's trade! He was an artisan and the son of an artisan. See St. Joseph, foster-father of the Infant God, become His instructor and His master; bringing Him up to labor, teaching Him His trade; and Jesus the while appearing to learn, as a testimony of affection and gratitude towards St. Joseph, rendering him and the Blessed Virgin all the assistance that a good son would give his parents. What a touching picture ! Let us try to reproduce it in every family fireside, by advising children to consult God in prayer on the choice of a profession and state of life, and inculcating to them that wages may be used to advantage in every condition of life. Have those over whom you exercise influence cultivate habits of industry, and, if possible, have the daughter to pursue her occupations under the vigilance of her mother, the son to aid his father, and all to dwell together, rendering mutual services, which should be the honor and joy of a Christian family.

SECOND POINT: Family life is strengthened by a holy observance of the Sunday ; that is to say, by refraining from servile works, assisting at Mass in the parish church, and seeking such amusements and relaxations as tend to unite the family circle. Let us contemplate the Holy Family at Nazareth, and draw from its example the confirmation of our opinion. In that admirable family no other absence is sought but that commanded by the law. Notice the sorrow and regret evinced by Mary and Joseph at Jerusalem for having lost the Child Jesus, though they could not have reproached themselves with negligence. See them together in the temple, at public prayer, at work, and at relaxations from duty. There was never a second occasion for the Blessed Virgin to search for her divine Son, whom she once supposed to be taken from her tender care. Christian parents and children, keep holy the Sabbath day ! It is, by excellence, the day of the Lord ; but it is also the day of rest for families. Remain in your own parish, let your recreations be holy, and taken as much as possible in common. O Christian parents ! have you not often cause to search, weeping and sorrowful, for your children ? The Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Joseph had no cause for anxiety concerning the soul of Jesus ; but you, alas ! on those festival days and evenings, when your children spend hours from home, have cause for anxious search in fear; for it is not the mortal life that is in danger, but the immortal souls of your precious charges.

THIRD POINT: Family ties are strengthened and affection nourished by the mutual interchange of thought, duties of respect towards the head of a family, instructions given to children, and the thousand other acts tending to attract the heart. Picture to yourselves the interior of the Holy Family at Nazareth! See Jesus, Mary, and Joseph at their meals, at work, and in conversation. What heavenly peace and consummate happiness, by the presence and union of the father, the mother, and the Child! Ah! could all families spend more time at the domestic fireside, and find there the rest and pleasure sought for elsewhere, how much happiness would be obtained for the thousand desolate homes whose members, carried away by love of dissipation and forbidden pleasures, bring sorrow and misery to their families !

PRAYER

HOLY St. Joseph ! make us enter in spirit into the house of Nazareth, honored by so many mysteries, but especially by the hidden life you led there for many years with Jesus and Mary. Obtain for us from the hearts of Jesus and Mary an esteem for a hidden life, and the desire of practising it after their example, with the interior virtues necessary for so holy an enterprise.

RESOLUTIONS

PREPARE to receive Holy Communion on the feast of St. Joseph.

Conform your will to the will of others.

Sacrifice personal tastes to the pleasure of others.

Seek the good of others at the cost of your own inclinations.

Recite the Our Father and Hail Mary once, and St. Joseph, pray for us, three times.

MARCH 4 - SIXTEENTH DAY

ST. JOSEPH, MODEL OF JUSTICE

Sancte Joseph, fabrorum et operariorum exemplar, ora pro nobis.

St. Joseph, model of artisan and workmen, pray for us.

FIRST POINT: Jesus and Joseph were artisans. Divine Providence selected this condition of life for them, in order to honor and sanctify manual labor for them, which the nations of antiquity regarded as mean and debasing. Jesus and Joseph are in this capacity presented as models to those who earn their bread in the sweat of their brow. Laborers and mechanics participate more fully in the blessings promised in the Gospel to the poor than do those in more elevated positions, for they have less to fear from the curse that falls on the abuse of riches. True, their condition is in itself painful and unpleasant to nature, particularly at times when work fails or salaries decrease so as not to meet demands of maintenance ; yet in those trials they ought to be encouraged and consoled by the example of these great models, Jesus and Joseph. Let them choose St. Joseph for their patron and protector. Jesus, our divine Saviour, gave up the employment of a mechanic during the last three years of his life, in order to attend to his divine mission ; but St. Joseph continued his labors until his death, and he was known among his contemporaries as Joseph the carpenter.

SECOND POINT : The duties of a laborer or mechanic are: order and regularity in his habits of life, strict honesty in his commercial relations, a detestation of the use of false weights and measures, and of deception in any form. He was an honest and noble mechanic, or, in the

widest acceptance of the expression, was just by excellence. Admire the sublime elevation of soul manifested in this holy descendant of Juda's kings. When we see him labor with his hands for maintenance, we perceive the nobility of character, purity of conscience, and delicacy of sentiment exhibited in the self-sacrificing spirit of the spouse of the most pure Virgin. What admirable simplicity portrayed in his obedience to the mandate of the sovereign and the laws of the country, even at the risk of excessive fatigue to the Blessed Virgin, who bore the Son of God in her most chaste womb !

THIRD POINT: The secret of this ennobling and sanctifying influence on the actions of St. Joseph, even in his obscure condition, is the purity of intention which directed his every work. It is well known that the virtues of the Blessed Virgin and of St. Joseph were not made less brilliant by the obscurity of their lives ; for in the sight of God, the Supreme and Eternal Truth, Mary and Joseph were higher than the greatest sovereigns. Self-love suffices to obscure the most meritorious and brightest act ; and though the hidden virtues are less liable to be wrought upon by the fatal illusions of self-love, still they are not entirely safe from its baneful influence, unless we keep constant watch over the movements of our hearts. We must strive to acquire the habit of virtue, so that the good may predominate in us. Our actions become the more meritorious, and the virtuous habits acquired are the more elevated, according as our intention is centred in God. Of all the supernatural motives, that of charity is most capable of inciting our souls to good. We should offer to God every act, however insignificant, and let love for him animate every thought, word, and action. The poor and lowly can become great in merit and virtue, as did St. Joseph. They can imitate him as their model, and invoke him as their protector.

PRAYER

HOLY St. Joseph, be the protector and model of all those who are obliged to labor for the support of their families. Teach them to fulfil their duties in a Christian manner ; recall to their minds in what true greatness consists ; and obtain for them fidelity to your example. May they learn from you that the secret of true happiness, even here on earth, is moderation of desires, patience, resignation, the hope of heaven, and the joy of loving and serving God.

RESOLUTIONS

AVOID all conversations having a tendency to make you dissatisfied with your condition in life.

Let the poor and lowly thank God for having called them to a state of poverty, and those favored with wealth and luxury beg of God to enable them to use these gifts for their eternal salvation.

Do not seek for dainties to satisfy your palate.

Recite the Our Father and Hail Mary once, and St. Joseph, pray for us, three times.

MARCH 5 - SEVENTEENTH DAY

ST. JOSEPH, MODEL OF CHARITY TOWARDS OUR NEIGHBOR

Sancte Joseph, in charitate ardentissime , ora pro nobis.

St. Joseph, model of charity towards our neighbor, pray for us.

WE will now consider St. Joseph in his relations with his neighbor. As a carpenter, a voluntary

exile, and a citizen of his native country, he proves to us, by his example, that of all the duties we owe to our neighbor, charity is the first.

FIRST POINT : The law of charity binds us equally towards God and our neighbor. It might be deemed necessary to use a different term by which to designate the supreme and absolute love we have for God in distinction from that we bear towards our neighbor. But to separate the love of God from the love of our neighbor would be to deny the nature of love, which engages the dearest and most intense affections of the heart, and which disposes us to forget and sacrifice ourselves for those we love. The second commandment is like unto the first, says our Saviour, so much so that its origin and its end are the same, for it is the image, the will, the love of God ; in a word, it is God whom we love in our neighbor. We can not separate the love of God and the love of our neighbor, for loving our neighbor in a Christian manner is loving God. " Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, thy whole mind, thy whole strength, and thy neighbor as thyself." This precept is the expressed command of our Saviour, strictly recommended to us, and its fulfilment will be the badge by which the disciples of Jesus Christ will be known. The heart of St. Joseph was inspired with this tender and devoted love for the whole human family.

SECOND POINT : We must practise charity in our relations with our friends and enemies. It seems unnecessary for us to mention the duty of love for friends. Our Lord says, " If you love them that love you, what reward shall you have ? Do not even the publicans this? " It is precisely that your friendship may not be similar to that of the pagans that your thoughts, affections, and hearts are referred to the example of St. Joseph. In his humble condition his friends were few. None are mentioned in the Gospel, unless it be that the title may be given to the shepherds and wise men who came to Bethlehem. Friendships which are produced by love of pleasure, sympathy of character, business relations, or natural affection independent of a higher and holier aim, have not love of God for their motive. The Gospel, moreover, commands us not only to forgive our enemies, and pray for them, but also to love them. This precept is violated by a great number of Christians. We entertain and manifest cold reserve and resentment towards those who have offended or injured us ; yet each day we say, " Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us." These words should be dwelt upon until we are well impressed with their import.

THIRD POINT: We owe the duty of charity towards all mankind. St. Joseph greeted his neighbor with a friendly smile, evoked by love ; and as no one was excluded from the love of Jesus, neither did St. Joseph deny his love to any one. Wherever Providence placed him, all manifested indifference towards him on account of his poverty, but he in return regarded them with affection, and desired their salvation. Let us strive to benefit some one each day of our lives, either by prayers or example, being particularly kind to those who offend us or manifest ingratitude towards us, and let us be convinced that Jesus Christ and His love are sufficient for us.

PRAYER

GLORIOUS St. Joseph, thy name is synonymous with sweetness and charity. Each word of the Gospel concerning thee seems to exhale the perfume of these amiable virtues. Pray for us that we may imitate thee in the avoidance of discontent, impatience, jealousy, hatred, bitterness,

violence, and resentment, and obtain that our whole lives be animated by charity, that at death we may be received with mercy and love by the God of love.

RESOLUTIONS

DURING the course of the day recall to mind the preceding reflections.

Repeat from time to time the invocation : St. Joseph, meek and humble, pray for us.

Rejoice in the good of others. Pardon all injuries.

Recite the Our Father and Hail Mary once, and St. Joseph, pray for us, three times.

MARCH 6 - EIGHTEENTH DAY

ST. JOSEPH, MODEL OF HUMILITY

Sancte Joseph, in humilitate profundissime, ora pro nobis.

St. Joseph, profoundly humble, pray for us.

FIRST POINT: The principal virtue in our relations with our neighbor is humility. This virtue, so little known among the generality of worldlings, is of purely Christian origin. We will speak here of a few of its characteristic traits. Humility is the acquiescence of the mind and heart to the knowledge of our own misery and nothingness. Whatever increases and strengthens this knowledge may serve in some measure to develop one or more of the qualities of humility. In the first place, frequent reflection on the infinite greatness of God contributes much to this virtue, placing before our minds the contrast which naturally arises from the thought of His infinite perfections and our own unworthiness. We are but creatures, holding all we have from God. "What have you that you have not received?" says St. Paul. This reflection serves to maintain in us sentiments of the most profound humility. We have, perhaps, offended God grievously; and in consequence of the inclination to evil which we find in ourselves, in spite of all our resolutions, we still continue to fall into many faults. "The just man falls seven times," says the wise man. We can of ourselves do nothing towards our eternal salvation, not even form a good thought, without the aid of that all powerful Being who created us. God must aid and support us in the accomplishment of all the good we do, and yet how have we corresponded to this grace? Here are motives on which we can and must rely, particularly on the last, in order to be convinced of our spiritual misery. However, to have humility, it is not sufficient to acquiesce with the mind alone to the knowledge just mentioned; for that of the heart is also necessary, inasmuch as we must not revolt or complain, but submit and be resigned, and even go so far as to desire to be perfectly well known and treated as we deserve. This is the sense conveyed in the expression of our Saviour, "Learn of me, for I am meek and humble of heart." This divine lesson, so difficult on account of the innate pride in us, we also receive, and should learn, from St. Joseph, who obtained it from the loving heart of Jesus, and we should earnestly implore Him to impart the secret of acquiring it to us.

SECOND POINT: We have said that after charity, humility, more than all the other virtues, enables us to regulate our conduct towards our neighbor. The words of our divine Saviour already quoted will make this more clearly understood: "Learn of me, for I am meek and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls." The word meek, used by Jesus before that of humble, and the words terminating the quotation, reveal to us, in all its beauty, the doctrine we are to explain. Meekness, that virtue which of itself affords inexpressible delight,

accompanied, as it is, by the promise of so great a reward, seems to be, by excellence, the virtue most needed for the gaining of our neighbor. Has not our Lord Himself said, " Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land ;" or, in other words, Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the heart of man? Meekness, .says St. Francis de Sales, is the sister or flower of charity ; but, mark well, we can not be meek or even good Christians unless we are humble, and we will certainly be meek if we are humble of heart. Humility, then, such as we have characterized in the first point, must necessarily be accompanied by meekness. Have we understood it thus, and endeavored to make this our constant practice and the rule of our conduct towards our neighbor? Does our humility tend to bring him joy, calm, and peace ? Does it afford rest to our own souls ?

THIRD POINT: This examination of ourselves is painful, because humiliating; and perhaps we are not yet sufficiently humble to undergo it as we should. Let us rest our minds and hearts in beholding a touching model of humility ! Let us contemplate St. Joseph in. the different conditions in which he was placed by divine Providence, and see his lowly humility! Not a word of complaint ever escaped him ; no regret for the departed grandeur of his family; no thought of complacency on the mission fulfilled by him ; he considers himself only as the servant and dispenser of the things confided to him. He conforms in all things to the divine will, never murmuring under the many crosses placed upon him. Meek and forbearing towards all, in humility he possessed his soul. Here is your model. In what do you resemble him ? Implore his assistance in overcoming your many defects.

PRAYER

DEAR St. Joseph! grant that by thy example and that of my divine Saviour I may become meek and humble of heart. Thou, who in this wert a faithful imitator of Jesus, cause these virtues to enter deeply into my soul, and grant that by the practice of them I may become more and more like thee. I abandon my self to thee, and invoke thy aid. This lesson of humility is one of the most difficult in the Gospel ; but nothing is impossible to God. And thou wilt be for me an all powerful suppliant at the throne of grace, whence my soul may be imbued with meekness and humility. Amen.

RESOLUTIONS

DURING the course of the day recall to mind the preceding reflections.

Repeat from time to time : St. Joseph, meek and humble, pray for us.

Convince yourself of your miseries by reflecting on the goodness of God and your ingratitude.

Willingly accept the humiliations that may befall you.

MARCH 7 - NINETEENTH DAY

ST. JOSEPH, MODEL OF RELIGIOUS

Sancte Joseph, vir juste atque perfecte, ora pro nobis.

St. Joseph, just and perfect man, pray for us.

FIRST POINT: A religious vows the practice of the evangelical counsels by subjecting himself in a particular manner to perfect obedience. The Gospel does not tell us that St. Joseph contracted any such engagements, but we infer from tradition that he made a vow of chastity.

Whatever may have been the nature of the promises by which he bound himself to God, the perfection of his life gives him a close resemblance to religious, and he is proposed to them as a model. A religious makes the three vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. St. Joseph was poor, chaste, and obedient; but, at the same time, his manner and condition of life give him as a model to persons living in the world, and who wish to serve God more perfectly than the generality of Christians, and to add the practice of counsels to the virtue of precept.

You who have made sacred engagements with God, renew them now with special fervor, and place them under the protection of St. Joseph. You who feel in your hearts the desire of leading a more perfect life by applying yourselves to the realization of the virtues, spirit, and the perfection of religious, invoke your father, St. Joseph, for you are of his family. And you who live the ordinary lives of Christians, and do not feel yourselves called to the practice of the counsels, be faithful in fulfilling all the commandments required of you ; for in this way progress will be gained each day, and at last a relative perfection will be attained. Not to advance is to recede. Place yourselves to day under his protection, and on this his feast day his holy prayers will serve as a support to yours.

SECOND POINT : No religious by the fulfilment of his vows has ever attained so high a degree of perfection as St. Joseph. Living in the world, surrounded by the objects from which a religious separates him self, and even possessing them ; reserving rights which the religious renounces, St. Joseph, by a continual self-denial and entire abandonment to the will of God, practised the three virtues of poverty, chastity, and obedience in all that was in them most difficult, pure, and elevated. He was, it is true, proprietor of his little home and his working-tools, but his was an ownership detached from all things, willing to be in exile, and ready to remove wherever and whenever God desired him. St. Joseph was a husband, and he lived with his chaste spouse as her guardian, consoler, protector, and support. But he was the virginal spouse of the most pure Virgin. He commanded because he was the head of a family, the care of which was given him ; and though he held the authority un til his latest breath, he nevertheless was most obedient, since he conformed him self to all the orders of Providence, and accomplished them with precision and eagerness, as is testified by the words of the Gospel. Let us imitate this beautiful model.

THIRD POINT : In order to understand the degree of religious perfection attained by St. Joseph, we must consider that he was not sustained by any of those human motives which faith may countenance, though they be detrimental to perfection, since they afford natural pleasure. His life was hidden and unknown. He cared not for fame, nor for friendly encouragement, nor human patronage. The joy of a good conscience, the satisfaction of having fulfilled his duty, and the love of God, were sufficient for him. In this he is a model for religious and all persons engaged by vow to the service of God. Let us examine the motive by which we are animated. If it be solely with a view of pleasing God and testifying our love for Him, let us thank God for giving us grace to act thus. Let us not allow human motives to influence nor detract from vows so noble, pure, and sacred that we offer to God in testimony of our love for Him ; and those in the world who live without having made any formal engagement binding them to the practice of the counsels and perfection should know that St. Joseph occupied a position similar to theirs, and that, though he made no religious vow, he was nevertheless more perfect than they are. Imitate him by daily aspiring to a closer union with Jesus Christ and fidelity to the inspirations

of conscience.

PRAYER

BLESSED Joseph! since Jesus while on earth was subject to thee, rendered prompt obedience to thy commands, and cherished thee with most especial love and honor, how shall He now refuse thee anything in heaven, where all thy merits receive their full reward? Pray for me, therefore, holy patriarch, and obtain for me these necessary graces: first of all, that I may have a sincere contrition for my sins; that I may ever hate and fear all that is evil, and flee from it with firmness and constancy, especially from my most besetting sins: grant that I may amend my life daily more and more, and constantly apply myself to the acquiring of virtue, especially those virtues I need most; and that I may be kept safe amid the various temptations and occasions by which my soul may be exposed to the peril of damnation. For these and for all other needful graces, O holy Joseph! I commend myself to the goodness and mercy of my God, and to thy fatherly care and intercession! Amen.

RESOLUTIONS

DURING the course of the day recall to mind the preceding reflections. Repeat from time to time the invocation: St. Joseph, model of all virtues, pray for us. Do not regard stubbornness and obstinacy as dignity of character; but let sincerity and goodness, or rather humility and meekness, be the true dignity we will strive to attain. Make some sacrifice that will enable you to lay aside an alms for the Holy Father. Recite a Pater and Ave once, and St. Joseph, pray for us, three times.

MARCH 8 - TWENTIETH DAY

ST. JOSEPH, MODEL OF OBEDIENCE

Sancte Joseph, vir obedientissime, ora pro nobis.

St. Joseph, most obedient, pray for us.

FIRST POINT: The necessity of obedience. Every man is obliged to obey. Every Christian should render implicit obedience to the commands of God and of His Church. We have previously considered the duty of children to obey their parents; we will now consider the obligation of obedience which binds us all. To obey is incumbent on all men. Though God does not Himself confer with us, nor send special messengers to us, as he did to Joseph, nevertheless He gives us His law, and manifests himself to us through His Church in the teaching of His ministers; therefore the fulfilling of our duties is but an act of obedience. Moreover, all are, in a measure, dependent on certain authorities, and, be these civil, religious, or parental, we are bound in justice to render obedience to them. We obey God when we submit to lawful authority; and, on the contrary, when we refuse to obey those whom the will of God has placed over us, we disobey God Himself. St. Joseph obeyed the mandate of the Emperor Augustus in going to Bethlehem; but he had in view an authority far superior to that of a worldly prince, for he recognized the will of God in the command of his earthly ruler.

SECOND POINT: Advantages of obedience. Scripture says, "An obedient man shall speak of victory." In fact, the victory gained over self-love and pride in rendering obedience to others, and submitting our will to theirs, immeasurably multiplies the triumphs of a Christian, and

these triumphs may be gained each day. According to another passage found in Scripture, "Obedience is better than sacrifice." In explanation of this text, St. Gregory says in the immolation of victims, it is the flesh of animals that is offered to God ; whereas, by obedience we sacrifice ourselves. The merit of one act of obedience may be extended to a series of acts, and serve to consecrate them all to God ; sometimes one act devotes an entire life to God. Thus St. Joseph, by obeying the orders of the emperor, procured the fulfilment of all the prophecies concerning the birth of our Saviour. By his flight into Egypt, he consecrated several years of his life to the accomplishment of the designs of God. We should be grateful to God for giving us a means whereby to acknowledge our desire of submitting to His will, in the prayer He taught His disciples: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." We should say these words with a lively feeling of our dependence on Him.

THIRD POINT : Qualities of Obedience. — St. Joseph obeyed in spirit and in truth. He followed the dictates of his conscience in the sight of God, and .with the desire of pleasing Him ; not caring how men should regard him, nor had he any fear of creating their displeasure, nor the desire of attracting their attention and admiration. St. Joseph obeyed promptly. The Scripture assures us that he executed the orders of God at the instant that they were manifested to him. What homage and love we may render to God by this ready obedience, and what a source of graces is opened for us if we submit promptly to the will of those authorized by our heavenly Father to command us ! Love was the motive and principle of the obedience of Joseph. Where love is, obedience is sweet. All who are lawfully placed in authority hold their position by the will of God ; and even though they be harsh, severe, morose, and unkind, still they should be obeyed, on the consideration that God wills us to be subject to them, and thereby prove our love for Him.

PRAYER

HOLY St. Joseph, obtain for me the true spirit of obedience. Help me to subdue my pride and submit my will freely to the salutary yoke of obedience. Let my soul be animated by a humility like unto that of our Mother Mary when she said : " Behold the handmaid of the Lord ; be it done unto me according to Thy word " ; and pray that I may understand the advantages and necessity of faithful obedience. Amen.

RESOLUTIONS

DURING the course of the day recall to mind the preceding reflections.
Repeat from time to time : St. Joseph, model of obedience, pray for us.
Conform your will to the will of your superiors.
Render a prompt and loving obedience to those who command you.
Recite the Our Father and Hail Mary once, and St. Joseph, pray for us, three times.

MARCH 9 - TWENTY-FIRST DAY

ST JOSEPH, MODEL OF RELIGIOUS OBEDIENCE

Sancte Joseph, vir obedientissime, ora pro nobis.

St. Joseph, most obedient, pray for us.

OBEDIENCE is a virtue which imparts peace to the faithful soul, be he religious or secular.

Ecclesiastics and religious are indeed happy in the certainty of always performing the will of God by obeying their rules and superiors.

FIRST POINT : Obedience practised by Superiors. — Superiors have some higher authority to whom they owe subjection, Even the princes of the earth have superiors in those who direct them in either spiritual or temporal matters. It is a relief for those who command to feel that they are dependent on some one, whom they are to obey. To go still further, they can practise this virtue not only by obeying their superiors and equals, but in a manner their inferiors, by listening with kind attention to them, and never making them feel their inferiority. Jesus Christ himself teaches this in his conduct towards St. Joseph, and the life of this holy patriarch presents many examples of this admirable virtue.

SECOND POINT : Superiors and parents, when commanding, should seek only the greater glory of God. With this disposition of mind and this intention in view, they will find that in commanding others they are invariably obeying God. The faithful practice of these two principles will give the command a mildness and force which it would not otherwise possess. Let us contemplate St. Joseph as superior in his domestic capacity over Jesus and Mary, and admire his sweetness and humility. He is our model. Do we resemble him ?

THIRD POINT : Parents and superiors, in fact, all who are placed over others, should have specified rules for the regulation of their different actions and exercises of each day. Thus, in the morning, they should strive to foresee all that may happen before evening, and thereby prevent many faults of inadvertence. Besides, by having a specified time for each action, they will have frequent occasion of exercising their fidelity in the practice of obedience. Again, contemplate St. Joseph in the cottage at Nazareth, dwelling with Jesus and Mary. Order and regularity attend his every action. He has a specified time for rising, for prayer, for meals, work, relaxation, and even for repose. The Gospel, telling of their journey to Jerusalem, says :
" And when he was twelve years old, they were going up into Jerusalem, according to the custom of the feast, and having fulfilled the days " ; and from this we may infer that all their actions were regulated according to rule.

PRAYER

ST. JOSEPH, admirable model of obedience, teach me to obey like thee ; grant that, in commanding others, I myself may not lose the spirit of obedience. Assist me, I beseech thee, dear Saint, and with thy aid I will be sure of success.

RESOLUTIONS

DURING the course of the day recall to mind the preceding reflections.
Accustom your mind to view the will of God in the orders of your superiors.
Be particularly faithful to your rule.
Recite the Psalm " Miserere " on your knees.
Say the Our Father and Hail Mary once, and St. Joseph, pray for us, three times.