

THE MONTH OF ST. JOSEPH

WEEK 4

MARCH 10 - TWENTY SECOND DAY AND FIRST DAY OF NOVENA

ST. JOSEPH, DEPOSITARY OF THE SECRETS OF GOD

Sancte Joseph, coadjutor magni consilii, ora pro nobis.

St. Joseph, depositary of great designs, pray for us.

FIRST POINT: The first great design in which St. Joseph co-operated was the sanctification of his soul. God created us without our co-operation, but He will not justify us without it. The greater the graces and privileges received, the more humble and earnest must be our endeavors to correspond with them. The creature has nothing for commendation in himself for the concurring in these graces ; on the contrary, he should fear lest sufficient has not been done on his part. St. Joseph understood perfectly well the necessity of this co-operation. Penetrated with gratitude for the favors he had received, he strove only to correspond faithfully with them. We must likewise concur in the great design of our sanctification. God has made known to us, by innumerable lights and graces, that He wishes us to become partakers of His happiness and glory. He purifies us from our faults, offers us every means of obtaining pardon, assists us in acquiring virtue, and, above all, the virtue of charity. It was charity that caused Him to reveal Himself to us, to assume our weak nature, becoming man for our salvation. Deus caritas est — " God is charity." Do we comprehend the sublimity of our destiny, and strive to attain it ? The grace of God is necessary to advance in perfection, but our co-operation is required. The grace of God is with me, says St. Paul.

SECOND POINT: St. Joseph was made participator in another great design of God : the care of Jesus, the Incarnate Word, and Mary, the most perfect of all creatures, masterpiece of the hand of God, purer and more exalted than the angels. The intimate, minute, and deep knowledge which he obtained of them was revealed to him by degrees. The angels, shepherds, and wise men, the voice of the multitude, the interior lights, but, above all, his thirty years' residence with them, which the angels themselves might have envied, served to show to St. Joseph the mysteries of grace and love attached to the persons of Jesus and Mary. This

successive and gradual knowledge gave place to transports of admiration and delight. What must have been the happiness of St. Joseph in being so closely united to Him whom the angels and saints revere, and before whom they bow in lowly adoration ! We may not be able to obtain the same degree of knowledge of these two beings, yet we can and should study daily to make progress in it. For have we not the Gospel explained and interpreted by the Church ; the lives of the saints, which are reflections of the lives of Jesus and his holy Mother? We have, above all, the Holy Eucharist ; and where can be found more touching or more admirable remembrances of Nazareth ?

THIRD POINT: The third mystery in which St. Joseph was made a participator was that of which St. Paul speaks when he says, " And evidently great is the mystery of godliness which was manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, appeared unto angels, hath been preached unto the Gentiles, is believed in the world, is taken up in glory." The Incarnation, united with Redemption, for the salvation of the whole world, is the mystery in which St. Joseph, after the Blessed Virgin, became participator, he aided, by his obedience, zeal, and prudence, in the accomplishment of these designs ; he contracted engagements with God which served to attach him to all mankind, rendering him in some manner responsible for each one of us, and even for the existence of our adorable Saviour. We, in turn, are obliged to co operate by word and example in the fruits and effects of these mysteries. The mystery of the Incarnation is forcibly brought to the mind each day as we repeat the Angelus, " And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."* This part of the Angelus, fervently said, may be offered up by the pious soul in reparation for the affronts offered to the Redeemer by the taunts of the impious, the contempt of the infidel, the forgetfulness of the tepid, and the indifference of so many relaxed Christians.

PRAYER

HOLY St. Joseph ! my mind is deeply penetrated with the thoughts of these great truths; but I need the inspirations of divine grace to be faithful to the inspirations received. Do thou obtain for me that, like thee, I may faithfully concur in the designs of God. Amen.

RESOLUTIONS

RECALL to mind the preceding reflections.

From time to time repeat : St. Joseph, faithful to divine grace, pray for us.

Carefully banish all distractions during prayer.

Avoid deliberate sins.

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

NOVENA

DIRECTIONS FOR EACH DAY OF THE NOVENA. — Begin with the Litany of the Saints (found at the end of the booklet), say the following prayer, recite the Our Father and the Hail Mary three times, and conclude by the Oblation : O holy Joseph ! etc., found at the end of the booklet.

FIRST DAY:

BLESSED St. Joseph! born to be the guardian of Jesus, the protector and consoler of Mary, make powerful intercession for me, that my pious resolutions may not prove abortive, that I may be born to an interior and spiritual life, that I may have such an increase of sanctity, so ardent a love of purity, so great a conviction of my own vileness, so clear a light of the emptiness and vanity of worldly grandeur, as to esteem and relish only things that are eternal. Through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

MARCH 11 - TWENTY-THIRD DAY AND SECOND DAY OF NOVENA

ST. JOSEPH, MODEL OF PRUDENCE

Sancte Joseph, vir prudentissime, or a pro nobis.

St. Joseph, model of prudence, pray for us.

FIRST POINT : Prudence is a virtue which causes us to use the most appropriate means whereby to arrive at a proposed end. Prudence is a virtue old as the world. The Bible affords us admirable models of prudence. The first Joseph offers an example of this virtue unequalled in history, unless it be by the second Joseph, who signalized himself no less than the first by the prudent management of all confided to him. We have seen St. Joseph correspond with the designs of God in an admirable and perfect manner, and this correspondence was the fruit of his prudence. This is a necessary virtue, since one who is just and faithful to God is directed by it in the solution of the most delicate, important, and elevated questions. Our Saviour Himself tells us, " Be prudent as the serpent and simple as the dove." As the eyes of the servant never close completely, so prudence must always watch and rule our desires, words, and actions.

SECOND POINT : There are two kinds of prudence — worldly prudence and a prudence coming from God ; and it is necessary to discriminate between them. Worldly prudence, not having an object in view similar to Christian prudence, looks to the attainment of worldly advantages, and places the joy and happiness of man in the possession of them, not caring by what means this end be obtained, and fearing only the censure of public opinion and the law. The success attendant on this worldly prudence seems to justify its practice ; and its possessors fear nothing more than want of capacity, which they term a fault compromising them in the eyes of men; hence they avoid it. Have we to accuse ourselves of practising this prudence by allowing worldly motives to direct our actions ? The first Joseph was chosen by Pharaoh to teach prudence to the wise men of the court. Let us learn this virtue from our father, St. Joseph.

THIRD POINT : Christian prudence, unlike the one above mentioned, proposes for its aim the eternal salvation of the soul, the glory of God, and the accomplishment of His adorable will. Even when regarding temporal, material, social, or political matters, Christian prudence always looks beyond the terrestrial aim. This is the first law of Christian prudence. As to the means made use of for the attaining of the proposed end, it draws them from the rules laid down in the Gospel, and from the examples contained therein. In selecting from them, it accepts only those which conscience regards as perfectly legitimate. Blending humility with these, it fears not any threatened misfortunes, seeks not to avoid them by making use of expedients injurious not only to sanctity, but also to the dignity of a Christian. In working for God, a zeal enlightened by divine inspiration and directed by obedience is sure of success. St. Joseph is an admirable model of Christian prudence, the only one deserving of the name of a prudent man in its complete acceptation. St. Joseph was a simple, upright, and God fearing man. His simplicity was not the result of a weak mind or judgment, but proceeded from the Dispenser of all graces, and was bestowed for our example. How we imitate this sublime model?

PRAYER

PRUDENT saint! obtain for me the spirit of true simplicity. I have compromised by repeated infidelities, and have not made the proper use of, the means placed at my disposal for the attaining of this end by an all-wise Providence. Aid me, kind protector, to amend my life. Impress deeply on my heart the nothingness of earth and the importance of my eternal salvation.

RESOLUTIONS

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

Follow the advice of a director.

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

NOVENA

DIRECTIONS FOR EACH DAY OF THE NOVENA. — Begin with the Litany of the Saints, found at the end of the booklet, say the following prayer, recite the Our Father and the Hail Mary three times, and conclude by the Oblation : O holy Joseph ! etc., found at the end of the booklet as well.

SECOND DAY:

OMNIPOTENT Creator! whose unerring providence adds joy every moment to the angels in heaven and to the saints upon earth, I most humbly beg, through the intercession of St. Joseph, that I may cheerfully acquiesce and rejoice in everything that comes from Thy fatherly hand ; that I may be vigorous in executing Thy divine will, and glorify Thee in my present state. Grant me the true spirit of mortification to subdue my stubborn passions, to satisfy for what is past, and to be a preservation from future dangers. Grant that, by purity of intention, the meanest of my actions may be acceptable to Thee, as was the mite of the poor woman which was put into the treasury of the temple. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

MARCH 12 - TWENTY-FOURTH DAY AND THIRD DAY OF NOVENA

ST. JOSEPH, MODEL OF CHASTITY.

Sancte Joseph, vir virgo virginis matrist ora pro nobis.

St. Joseph, virgin spouse of a Virgin Mother, pray for us.

FIRST POINT: The vozv of virginity uniting Joseph and Mary. — We have already spoken of the title, Spouse of Mary, conferred on St. Joseph — a title which was the first and essential basis of his greatness. A virgin should have a virginal spouse ; and there is every reason to believe, independently of Scripture, that St. Joseph had taken the vow of chastity. The bond was reciprocal, and the marriage of Joseph and Mary served only to unite them more closely, and establish a mutual desire for the spiritual good of each other. " They are virgins uniting themselves/" says Bossuet, "and, like two bright stars, imparting their light to each other." St. Joseph united to the Blessed Virgin is a model which all

married persons should strive to imitate. Regulating their lives, words, and actions in accordance with this model, they need not fear being led astray from the path of holiness.

SECOND POINT : Honor of the title of virgin. — Barrenness in a family was regarded by the Jews as a dishonor, or at least a severe trial. We read in the old law of several just persons who accepted this trial with submission, but not without bitter regret. We have a touching example of this in the person of Anna, the mother of Samuel. Among the just who lived before the coming of our Saviour, Scripture does not mention any one who bound himself by vow to the practice of chastity. St. Joseph and the Blessed Virgin were the first. Let us congratulate and honor them as the recipients of this most glorious of all privileges. Virginity is the highest state of life to which a creature can be called. If we have the happiness of being called to this state, let us thank our divine Saviour for bestowing on us this greatest of graces. The married state is also holy, and is ranked by Jesus Christ among the sacraments, and sanctified in the Church by prayer. Virginity is holier, as is proved by the words of St. Paul : " Therefore, both he that giveth his virgin in marriage doth well, and he that giveth her not doth better." Each individual is in duty bound to correspond as well as he is able to his vocation.

THIRD POINT : Reward of the virginity of St. Joseph. — The special privilege of being called the foster-father of Jesus Christ and the guardian of the Holy Virgin was a reward of his virginity, as was also the inexpressible honor given him of having Jesus repose on his virginal heart. By this first example of virginity given to the world, St. Joseph became the father and guardian of all who make a similar vow. Virgins, as spouses of Jesus, should carefully guard and cherish this virtue, inasmuch as they are obliged to instil a love and respect for it into the hearts of those under their care, and knowing that the more they themselves love, revere, and practise it, the greater will be their influence over others, and the greater their reward in eternity.

PRAYER

○ THOU who gavest St. Joseph to Mary for a protector, and who didst favor the heart of this great saint by making it the first adorer of the Heart of Jesus in the bosom of his mother, grant that by his prayers and by imitating him I may dwell with him in the heart of the Immaculate Virgin, there to adore God for ever.

Amen.

RESOLUTIONS

RECALL to mind the preceding reflections.

Repeat often the invocation : St. Joseph, model of chaste souls, pray for us.

Pray for humility.

Repeat occasionally the words of St. Paul : " Lord ! what wilt thou have me do?"

Observe modesty of the eyes.

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

NOVENA

DIRECTIONS FOR EACH DAY OF THE NOVENA. — Begin with the Litany of the Saints, found at the end of the booklet, say the following prayer, recite the Our Father and the Hail Mary three times, and conclude by the Oblation : O holy Joseph ! etc., found at the end of the booklet as well.

THIRD DAY:

OMNIPOTENT God! at whose command every tree produces fruit of its kind, grant, through the intercession of Mary and Joseph, that I may serve Thee faithfully in the state in which Thou hast placed me. I firmly believe all Thou hast revealed ; protect me, lest I should be found among the number of those foolish virgins who carried lamps without oil. Assist me with Thy powerful grace, that I may be humble, charitable, and chaste , and not be like the barren fig-tree, fit only to be come fuel for eternal flames. This grace I implore through the infinite merits of Jesus, my Saviour. Amen.

MARCH 13 - TWENTY-FIFTH DAY AND FOURTH DAY OF NOVENA

ST. JOSEPH, MODEL OF PURITY

Sancte Joseph, vir virgo virginis matris, or a pro nobis.

Saint Joseph, virgin spouse of a Virgin Mother, pray for us.

FIRST POINT: Beauty of the virtue of purity. — This heavenly virtue renders us dear to God and to men. Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God. The perfume of this virtue is the most agreeable that can be offered to God. Purity assimilates man unto the angels. In praising purity, it is St. Joseph we eulogize. Virgin spouse of a Virgin Mother, pray for us. Preserve childhood inviolate in mind and heart, protect youth, support mature age ; and may the aged, through thy protection, add to their crowns gems of unsullied radiant purity.

SECOND POINT : The contrary vice — Where is the painter who can find figures sufficiently dark and horrible where with to picture the contrary vice ? God cursed it in the beginning of time in these terrible words : " My spirit shall not remain in man for ever, because he is flesh ! " God has punished it with fearful chastisements. In order to efface its stain from the earth, the Deluge was sent ; the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by fire ; a whole tribe among the Israelites was annihilated on account of the sin of a few ; David, the prophet king, chosen by God himself, was rigorously chastised for his sin by the loss of his kingdom and the death of his son. Solomon, the wisest of kings, died leaving the world uncertain as to his destiny. The list of chastisements by which God punished, even here on earth, the vice of impurity is inexhaustible. If God sometimes delays the punishment, it is not the less certain nor terrible. Woe to him who, for the gratification of sensuality, brings sin and disgrace to an accomplice, or, worse still, to a poor victim. The punishment given on earth to such is remorse of conscience ; and when this remorse is crushed, the neglect of religious practices follows, which is succeeded by loss of faith and, finally, that spiritual blindness which gives the sign of reprobation. Chaste spouse of a Virgin Mother, pray for and protect us.

THIRD POINT: Means of preserving purity. — Watching, mortification, and prayer. Our enemy goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour; and he must be resisted with the arms of faith, which are fasting, watching, and prayer. Our Lord himself tells us, when speaking of the demon of impurity, " This kind of demon can be expelled only by prayer and fasting." According to the interpretation of the Church of these words, fasting embraces all kinds of mortification and sacrifices. We have endeavored, during this month, to initiate you into the practice of mortification and sacrifices that could not injure your health nor interfere with the duties of your state of life. Let us strive to impress our minds with these thoughts and the salutary effects of these practices, so that we may derive lasting benefit from them, and make use of them in time of temptation, and at the same time be impressed with the truth that humility is necessary for us. The humble alone pass unsullied through this sort of temptation. Add to sacrifice, humility, and mortification morning and evening prayers, the sign of the cross in time of temptation, the invocation of the sweet names, Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, and the words of the Lord's Prayer, " Lead us not into temptation." But all these will not suffice if we do not guard our imagination and senses. " Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." Parents, watch over

your children ; be their visible guardian angels, their second providences. Masters and mistresses, watch over and correct the disorders of your household ; for nothing can escape the all-seeing eye of God, and you must account to Him at the tribunal of justice.

PRAYER

REMEMBER, O amiable and powerful protector, St. Joseph! that according to the testimony of your devoted servant, St. Teresa, no one ever implored your intercession with devotion and confidence without obtaining relief. Animated by this sweet and consoling hope, I come to you, O worthy spouse of the Virgin of virgins ! and at your feet I seek for refuge and protection. O you who have borne the glorious title of father of Jesus! reject not my humble prayer, but hear it faithfully, and present it for me to Him who disdained not to be called your son, and who will not refuse your petition. 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 purity, pray for us.

Say three Hail Marys daily, to preserve the virtue of purity.

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

NOVENA

DIRECTIONS FOR EACH DAY OF THE NOVENA. — Begin with the Litany of the Saints, found at the end of the booklet, say the following prayer, recite the Our Father and the Hail Mary three times, and conclude by the Oblation : O holy Joseph ! etc., found at the end of the booklet as well.

FOURTH DAY:

HOLY GHOST ! God of all comfort ! if Thou seest it expedient for the security of my salvation that I should be oppressed with tribulation, permit me not to fall. Infinite power! bear me up ; Thou knowest my weakness. Favor me with Thy grace, that I may be compassionate towards my neighbor, and govern myself with the same spirit of lenity and charity as if the case were my own. I deplore my censorious temper, and resolve to be upon my guard. I return Thee thanks for inspiring me with the resolution of becoming better ; but of myself, I am not able to persevere in my good intentions. I beg Thy assistance, that I may fulfil what Thou commandest ; and then, dear Lord, command what Thou pleasest. Afflict me with such crosses as I can endure, that I may discharge at least a part of the great debt due to the divine justice.

**MARCH 14 - TWENTY-SIXTH DAY
AND FIFTH DAY OF NOVENA**

ST. JOSEPH, MODEL OF ATTENTION IN PRAYER

Sancte Joseph, vir in oratione assidue, ora pro nobis.

St. Joseph, model of attention in prayer, pray for us.

FIRST POINT : Necessity of prayer. — We have said that prayer is absolutely necessary to preserve in us the sweet and delicate virtue of purity. It is important frequently to recall to our minds that prayer is essential to the practice of all the virtues, to the avoidance of sin, and in general to the fulfilment of our duties. Prayer is necessary not only as a means of soliciting the graces needed for our souls, but also as an homage of gratitude, adoration, and love towards God, whose infinite bounty, goodness, and love demand this triple return on our part. Our Lord Him self taught us this manner of prayer and left us a most admirable form in the " Our Father." Frequent prayer was recommended in the old law, and we see the exactitude with which the Pharisees observed this counsel ; but what they did merely through ceremony St. Joseph, a true Israelite, fulfilled in a spirit of faith, animated by love of God.

SECOND POINT: Essential qualities of prayer. — Prayer must be accompanied with confidence, humility, and fervor. Prayer is, in itself, an act of humility ; for in soliciting favors from God, or when returning thanks for those already received, we find ourselves penetrated with a knowledge of our own unworthiness and misery, and our absolute dependence on God. This humility tends to increase our confidence in the goodness and mercy of God ; and prayers uttered with confidence always receive the favor solicited, though for a time it may seem that Almighty God refuses to listen favor ably to our petitions. Love, accompanied by fervor, is the third disposition which renders our prayers pleasing to God and efficacious in our advancement in perfection. " He who ceases to love ceases to pray," says St. Augustine. A few moments' meditation on these words would suffice to convince us of the importance of this most essential quality of prayer.

THIRD POINT: Prayer in common. — We will find our models in this exercise in the humble cottage at Nazareth. It cannot be deemed rash to assert that Jesus,

Mary, and Joseph frequently practised this holy exercise, nor can it be too much to consider Mary and Joseph as being the first to receive from the lips of Jesus that prayer of which He Himself is the author. We are bound, after their example, to establish in our homes, not only the use of this prayer, but also family prayer, at least in the evening; and if this usage has been already established in the family of which we are members, we should endeavor by every means in our power to introduce it into the homes of others. Nor should we content ourselves with merely reciting family prayers, but should, moreover, accustom ourselves to read daily passages from the Scriptures, the "Lives of the Saints," "Imitation of Christ," "History of the Church," or some other work on religion or piety. Incredible advantages have been derived from the observance of these pious practices, not the least of which is the impression which it stamps on the mind of youth. Again, we see how pleasing is this practice to our Lord in the assurance He gives when He says, "Again I say to you that if two of you shall agree upon earth concerning anything whatsoever they shall ask, it shall be done for them by my Father who is in heaven."

PRAYER

HOLY St. Joseph ! permit me to unite my prayers with those thou didst offer up with Jesus and Mary. Obtain that I may become more attentive and more devout during prayer. Thou who art in a particular manner patron of family prayer, bless those who unite here on earth in praising Jesus, whose protector thou wert, and obtain for them the graces needed for their salvation. Yes, dear patron, bless them, and bless thy client now imploring thy assistance. Amen.

RESOLUTIONS

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

Pray often with confidence, humility, fervor, and love.

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

NOVENA

DIRECTIONS FOR EACH DAY OF THE NOVENA. — Begin with the Litany of the Saints, found at the end of the booklet, say the following prayer, recite the Our Father and the Hail Mary three times, and conclude by the Oblation : O holy Joseph ! etc., found at the end of the booklet as well.

FIFTH DAY:

O INFINITE God ! how truly may it be said of me, The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but thou knowest not thy Lord ! I admire thy love and charity. I am ashamed of my tepidity and ingratitude. Infinite Goodness ! I

come too late to love Thee ; but al though it be the eleventh hour, bestow on me the promised reward ; be to me a Saviour. Thou who hast bled for me, let me partake of Thy eternal charity. Grant that through the intercession of St. Joseph, my good resolutions may be perfected. I also beg that when I entertain Thee in the most blessed Sacrament, I may be favored with the same sentiments of adoration, love, and thanksgiving that St. Joseph experienced when received from Simeon to restore Thee to Thy blessed Mother. Amen.

MARCH 15 - TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY AND SIXTH DAY OF NOVENA

ST. JOSEPH, MODEL OF INTERIOR RECOLLECTION

Sancte Joseph, vir oratione assidue, ora pro nobis.

St. Joseph, most assiduous in prayer, pray for us.

FIRST POINT: The habit of prayer produces in the soul an interior recollection, which keeps the mind fixed on God, and prevents our being too much absorbed in exterior occupations. One who has acquired this habit lives in the continual presence of the great Being who called him into existence ; and, whether employed in laborious duties, or mingling in the busy scenes of life, he never loses sight of that one all-inspiring thought, beside which all earthly joys dwindle into nothingness. This is what we term the interior or meditative life. Let us consider how profound and tranquil must have been the life of St. Joseph, who, whether at work alone or with companions, had his heart and mind centred on God. We behold him ever the same ; his noble and serene countenance bearing that indelible mark which the constant union of the soul with God always imprints. Here is our model. Let us endeavor, after his example, to acquire this interior recollection, which will enable us to overcome temptations, whatever be their nature or strength. Habitual prayer is the most effectual means for obtaining this end ; and in order to aid those desiring to acquire this practice, we give two forms of prayer.

SECOND POINT : The first form is ejaculatory prayers, which are short aspirations directed to God with all the fervor of which the soul is capable ; occupying but a moment, they take from the evil one all power of depriving them of their efficacy. They have, then, a greater influence over the heart of Jesus, forcing Him, as it were, to listen favorably, and grant our petitions. Such, for example, were the aspirations of a Vincent de Paul, a Teresa, a Francis de Sales, a

Magdalen di Pazzi, and many others. What St. Joseph's were we know not ; but from a heart so just, so pure, and filled with the love of God as was his heart, aspirations ardent and fervent must have issued. Let us implore St. Joseph to obtain for us that our hearts may be animated with sentiments like unto his.

THIRD POINT : Mental prayer. — Mental prayer serves to unite our souls to God, and aids in the practice of habitual recollection. On commencing this exercise, we should place ourselves in the presence of God, adore His infinite majesty, acknowledge our own weakness and misery, implore the assistance of the Holy Ghost, and reflect a few moments on the proposed subject. This subject may consist of one of the truths of religion, a good thought, a passage from a pious book, or from the gospel or epistle of the day, a virtue to be acquired, or a vice to be overcome. The reflections made dispose our souls to become worthy recipients of grace ; emotions of the heart succeed the reflection, and these, with affections of the will, are the most important parts of the meditation. The exercise is finished by taking a practical resolution for the day, which may be drawn from the subject on which we meditated, or it may be the correction of a predominant fault, or the avoidance of an occasion of sin ; and, lastly, an aspiration should be chosen, to be repeated frequently during the day, so that it may serve the twofold duty of recalling to mind the meditation and the resolution taken. St. Francis de Sales, in his " Introduction to a Devout Life," particularly recommends meditation as a means of salvation.

PRAYER

GUARDIAN of Jesus and Mary, I unite my prayers with thy fervent aspirations and holy contemplations. Each day I will place my resolutions under thy protection and that of my Mother Mary, and under this double safeguard I will rest in the full assurance of one day attaining to the sublime height gained by those who applied themselves with zeal and fervor to the constant practice of this holy exercise. Teach me, dear father, to unite my prayers with those of Jesus and Mary, and grant that, after imitating thee closely here on earth, I may one day share in the joy and happiness of thy clients now in heaven. 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 interior recollection, pray for us.

Learn to become habitually recollected.

Resolve to make a meditation everyday.

Recite to-day, on your knees, the psalm, " Miserere."

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

NOVENA

DIRECTIONS FOR EACH DAY OF THE NOVENA. — Begin with the Litany of the Saints, found at the end of the booklet, say the following prayer, recite the Our Father and the Hail Mary three times, and conclude by the Oblation : O holy Joseph ! etc., found at the end of the booklet as well.

SIXTH DAY:

JESUS, my Maker and my Master, without whose merciful assistance I walk in darkness and perish ! I most humbly beg, through the intercession of St. Joseph, that Thou wilt grant me grace to escape from the servitude of sin, under which I have so long groaned, in order that I may enjoy the liberty of Thy faithful servants. I have frequently experienced Thy goodness, and I know Thy power; my trust is in both. Oh ! grant me constancy to despise the allurements of the world, and to remain undaunted under afflicting terrors. My dear Redeemer, I have too often lost Thee by sin : I have willingly and wilfully parted with Thee to follow my corrupt inclinations. O God ! who didst come to seek sinners, take pity on me, who am the greatest. Thou art now pleased to bless me with such a true sense of my former offences that I grieve not so much for the fear of punishment as for the misfortune of having offended Thee, the centre of all goodness.

I steadfastly purpose, through Thy grace, to seek Thee seriously by the reformation of my life, that I may find Thee in the heavenly Jerusalem reigning with the Father and the Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen.

MARCH 17 - TWENTY-EIGHTH DAY AND SEVENTH DAY OF NOVENA

ST. JOSEPH, OUR PROTECTOR

Sancte Joseph, hujus temporis specialis protector, ora pro nobis.

St. Joseph , our present special protector, pray for us.

FIRST POINT : Since the first ages of the Church, the greatest and most illustrious saints and doctors have spoken in highest terms of St. Joseph. Sts. Gregory Nazianzen, John Chrysostom, John Damascene, Ambrose, and Augustine were his panegyrists. In the course of centuries, the most eminent men have published his praises. Let it be sufficient for us to name Sts. Bernard,

Thomas of Aquin, and Bernardine of Sienna. But the honor paid him by the Church has been fully developed since the heresies of Luther and Calvin. St. Teresa seems to have received a special mission from Providence for the promotion of devotion to St. Joseph. Here are her own words relative to this devotion : " I cannot, without wonder, admiration, and love, think of the great graces God has given me through the intercession of St. Joseph, and of the great perils of body and soul from which he has rescued me. It seems that God accords to other saints the power to succor us in certain circumstances, but I know from experience that St. Joseph can help us at all times and on all occasions ; as though Jesus Christ wished to demonstrate that> as He was subject to him here on earth, He can now in heaven refuse him nothing. Other persons whom I advised to recommend themselves to his intercession have experienced his power in a similar manner, in consequence of which many now have great devotion to him, and daily feel more and more the truth of what I have asserted."

SECOND POINT: St. Teresa's example has found imitators in every Catholic country, and we find devotion to St. Joseph rapidly increasing. Churches and chapels erected in his honor, religious associations organized under his patronage, congregations placed under his protection, the month of March specially consecrated to his remembrance, the widespread custom of invoking his name after the names of Jesus and Mary — all bear testimony of an especial confidence in the protection of St. Joseph on the part of the children of the Catholic Church ; and the Church herself, through those who teach in her name, encourages and supports this generous impulse of confidence and affection. Taking only the pontificate of Pius IX., which is one of the most illustrious and glorious in the long series of popes, we see that almost immediately on his accession to the chair of St. Peter, he established the feast of the "Patronage of St. Joseph." In his memorable address delivered in 1862, he recommended the Church and her wants to the powerful protection of St. Joseph ; and later, by his authority, the entire Church was placed under his patronage.

THIRD POINT : The charity of many has become cold ; even faith itself is in danger of being lost in many souls ; and new means from the treasury of divine Providence are needed to animate zeal, faith, and piety. The wants of the Church have become more pressing since the attacks of modern heresies and the so-called philosophy of rationalism. God gives manifest proofs of the power of St. Joseph and His desire of having him honored and invoked by His children. When friends fail on earth, win for yourselves friends in heaven. What patronage more

appropriate than his in our times? At present, all persons seem to desire rank and fortune. Let them picture to their minds the majestic figure of St. Joseph living contented in faith, hope, and charity. The working-classes are pressed down by disguised preachers of pantheism, atheism, and socialism ; and secret societies seek to increase their numbers, threatening the world with an overthrow unprecedented in history. Let us invoke this patron of workmen, himself an artisan, whose secret was that of an interior, hidden, humble life entirely devoted to the service of God and the love of his neighbor, in union and company with Jesus and Mary.

PRAYER

REMEMBER, O amiable and powerful protector, St. Joseph ! that, according to the testimony of your devoted servant, St. Teresa, no one ever implored your intercession with devotion and confidence without obtaining relief. Animated by this sweet and consoling hope, I come to you, O worthy spouse of the Virgin of virgins ! and at your feet I seek for refuge and protection. O you who have borne the glorious title of father of Jesus ! reject not my humble prayer, but hear it favorably, and present it for me to Him who disdained not to be called your son, and who will not refuse your petition. Amen.

RESOLUTIONS

DURING the course of the day recall to mind the preceding reflections. Examine each action, and strive to acquire purity of intention in all you do. Mortify your desire for drink, in union with the thirst endured by Jesus in His passion.

NOVENA

DIRECTIONS FOR EACH DAY OF THE NOVENA. — Begin with the Litany of the Saints, found at the end of the booklet, say the following prayer, recite the Our Father and the Hail Mary three times, and conclude by the Oblation : O holy Joseph ! etc., found at the end of the booklet as well.

SEVENTH DAY:

OMNIPOTENT God! who descended from heaven to bring fire on earth, inflame my frozen heart, that I may imitate the virtues of St. Joseph. As a poor wretch at the gate of some noble and generous prince, expecting an alms, so I appear before Thee, wounded in all my senses by sin, and imploring charity in my great distress. I grieve for what is passed, not because I fear, but because I love. Nothing has succeeded with me, because I never consulted Thee as I ought. I hope, O Lord ! that I do not come too late. I beg, through the intercession of St.

Joseph, that I may avoid evil and do good ; that I may leave the broad road of iniquity, and walk in the narrow road that leads to eternal happiness ; that I may consecrate the remaining days of my short life to Thy honor, and attain the end for which I was created — to admire, praise, and love Thee for ever and ever. Amen.

MARCH 17 - TWENTY-NINTH DAY AND EIGHTH DAY OF NOVENA

ST. JOSEPH, PATRON OF A HAPPY DEATH

Sancte Joseph, protector morientium, ora pro nobis.

Saint Joseph , our protector in the hour of death , pray for us.

THREE reasons are given for the conferring of this title on St. Joseph.

FIRST POINT : He died in the arms of Jesus and Mary. To St. Joseph alone among men was given the consoling privilege of dying in the arms of Jesus and Mary. Sweet and tranquil must have been that death, attended as it was by those whose presence can calm the agitated soul, render less painful the final separation of the soul from the body, and alleviate the terrors of the awaiting judgment. Foolish indeed is the man who does not beg for this crowning grace of a happy death.

According to a tradition confirmed by revelation, the death of St. Joseph occurred a short time previous to the commencement of the public ministry of our Saviour. Nothing was yet known of the future prodigies to be wrought by Jesus — prodigies which were to reflect so much glory on the poor family of Nazareth. Joseph died obscure and unknown — a perfect type of the Christian death in all its beauty, simplicity, and grandeur. Jesus died on the cross, in torments and sufferings — a victim of propitiation for the sins of men ; and Mary, His Mother, expired fifteen years later, consumed with love and the ardent desire of beholding once more her divine Son, with whom she was so intimately united in soul. The death of St. Joseph differed from these two holy deaths, inasmuch as his was accompanied with regret for leaving on earth those who formed his happiness, and who were one day to become the brightest ornaments of heaven. But he died filled with hope in the assurance of a blessed eternity, encouraged by the all powerful love of Jesus and the sweet words of his Immaculate Spouse. *Moriatur anima mea morte justorum* — " Let my soul die the death of the just." If in my

last moments I feel a regret when leaving those I hold dear on earth, and the sorrow of that separation grieve my poor soul, do thou, dear patron, console me in the thought of the glorious reunion of all those united by the ties of blood, friendship, or faith, and whose happiness shall be consummated in heaven.

SECOND POINT : St. Joseph a powerful mediator with the heart of Jesus. After Jesus and Mary, what more powerful protector than St. Joseph can we invoke in the solemn and decisive moment on which all depends, when the soul in anguish calls on those who have the power of aiding and protecting her? Gerson says that the prayers addressed by St. Joseph to Jesus and Mary have the force of a command, rather than the form of a supplication. The confidence of a Christian becomes animated and enlivened by these thoughts, and the name of St. Joseph becomes a sure and impenetrable shield against the shafts of hell, and an all-powerful safeguard in the terrors of death.

THIRD POINT: St. Joseph was taught by Jesus and Mary to adopt us as his children. No mortal ever obtained so deep a knowledge of the hearts of Jesus and Mary as our dear father, St. Joseph. St. John was called the Beloved, the Apostle of predilection, on account of his having reposed on the bosom of our Saviour; but St. Joseph dwelt with Jesus during thirty years in an intimacy which the angels might have envied, and in the capacity of father. We should often reflect on what we owe St. Joseph in consideration of the numerous graces which he obtained from Jesus for all men, but especially for poor sinners. Moreover, in becoming the adopted father of Jesus, he became ours also ; for are we not named, though infinitely unworthy, the brothers of Jesus ? Alas ! far more appropriate would be the title executioners of the world's Saviour ; for we daily become such by the commission of sin. Still, St. Joseph claims us for his children, and the tears and blood of his innocent Son render us dearer in his eyes, while the remembrance of Calvary serves to increase his loving and paternal tenderness towards us. If the affection of a father for his child manifests itself most intensely at the hour of the death of the child, and if, as a Christian, he uses every means in his power to procure for it the graces attendant on a happy death, what, think you, must be the loving, earnest, anxious tenderness of our dear father, St. Joseph, when he sees one of his children on the point of being summoned before a just Judge? With fervor and love he then offers on behalf of the dying one the petitions addressed to himself!

PRAYER

LOVING father! permit me to address you to-day as if it were the last day of my life. Inspire me with the sentiments I shall experience on my death bed ; for then my soul will not seek for studied words, but will call on you from the depths of her own weakness and misery, pronouncing your name with love and confidence, and repeating often this little prayer : O dearest Father ! whom I have love so ardently, and so often invoked during life, pray for me now, and obtain for me the grace of a happy death. Amen.

RESOLUTIONS

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

Repeat from time to time : St. Joseph, patron of a happy death, pray for us.

Desire death as the only means of consummate union with God.

Recite on your knees the prayers for the faithful departed.

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

NOVENA

DIRECTIONS FOR EACH DAY OF THE NOVENA. — Begin with the Litany of the Saints, found at the end of the booklet, say the following prayer, recite the Our Father and the Hail Mary three times, and conclude by the Oblation : O holy Joseph ! etc., found at the end of the booklet as well.

EIGHTH DAY:

MOST glorious patriarch, my dear patron ! blessed are the eyes that see what you now see. Through the infinite merits of Christ, and by your powerful intercession, I hope, with holy Job, that in my flesh I shall see God my Saviour. Stretch out, in favor of your unworthy client, those happy arms that so often bore the Son of God and provided for Him. Petition that I may live, as I wish to die, always in the divine favor. I humbly implore you to entreat your Immaculate Spouse to unite her supplications with yours, that I may be of the blessed number of the elect. I most sincerely desire that you may be present at the dreadful hour of my death, and that the last words uttered by my parting breath may be Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

Thy mercy is above all thy works. O most holy Trinity ! I now appeal from the tribunal of Thy justice, and prostrate my self before the throne of Thy mercy, to obtain the pardon of my sins, and grace to persevere in keeping Thy

commandments to the end of my life. Who livest and reignest one God forever and ever. Amen.

MARCH 18 - THIRTIETH DAY AND NINTH DAY OF NOVENA

ST. JOSEPH, PATRON OF A HAPPY DEATH

Sancte Joseph, protector morientium, ora pro nobis.

St, Joseph, our protector in the hour of death, pray for us.

LET us again meditate on the important subject that yesterday engaged our attention, and, under the protection of St. Joseph, see what are the means of preparing ourselves for a happy death.

FIRST POINT : In order to die well, we must confess our sins and receive the Holy Communion worthily.

We may say that the best preparation for a happy death is a holy life ; also, that a tender devotion to St. Joseph is a great security in one's last moments ; and, finally, that all the practices and virtues to which the attention of the faithful has been called during this month, besides aiding them to live in a holy manner, will assist them to die happily. But there is still another means, of which we have not yet spoken, having reserved it for these last days, when the mind would naturally be better prepared to receive it as a truth. These means are Confession and Communion. The most ordinary, and yet the most essential, preparation for a happy death is the worthy reception of the last sacraments. If in our last illness we cannot receive these sacraments, we must endeavor to make up for this loss by our fervent desires and frequent aspirations. We ought daily to pray for the worthy reception of the Holy Viaticum.

SECOND POINT: We should frequently approach the sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist. Our Holy Mother, the Church, has set apart a specified time, during which we are to confess and communicate under pain of mortal sin. " Confess your sins at least once a year," she says, and adds, " Receive your Creator at Easter." Observe that she says, " at least once > year," manifesting the desire she has of seeing her children approach oftener. The primitive Christians received Holy Communion every day, or at least as often as they assisted at the holy sacrifice. It is indeed a sad sight to see a parish the members of which seldom or never approach the sacraments ; and the first step towards reformation

in such should be a change in this particular. It must not be fear that will induce us to receive the body and blood of Jesus Christ ; but a loving heart, convinced of its own misery and nothingness, must seek for grace and virtue at the fount of mercy and love. The more frequently and fervently we receive these sacraments during life, the better prepared we will be to receive them at the hour of death. Let us, then, accustom ourselves to frequent Communion.

THIRD POINT: We should endeavor to prepare ourselves to receive Holy Communion during life with the same dispositions we would wish to have at the hour of death. Let us adopt this practice in the Communion that is to crown the devotion of this beautiful month of St. Joseph. Let us approach the holy table with deep sentiments of humility, love, hope, and contrition, that our Lord may not only condescend to abide in our hearts, but even desire to enter therein. We may be led to suppose that the thought of receiving our Lord for the last time would fill our hearts with fear and terror ; but, on the contrary, it is the Holy Eucharist that makes the thought of death supportable and even sweet, enabling us to meet our Judge without fear, and stand in His august presence as a child before his father. If so much depends on the worthy reception of the sacraments, we ought to be exceedingly circumspect in our preparation, omitting nothing that could in the least degree contribute to make that preparation more devout and pleasing to God. The words used by a holy bishop immediately before his death are applicable to all when receiving the Holy Viaticum : " What need I fear in going to be judged by Him whom I love?"

PRAYER

GLORIOUS Joseph! my dear patron, inspire me with sentiments of the most ardent love towards Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament ; and, as I am about to receive Him at the close of this thy month, prepare, I beseech thee, my poor heart, that it may become an agreeable dwelling for Him. Grant that, by the worthy reception of this Sacrament during life, I may merit the same grace at the hour of my death.

Yes, dear St. Joseph, then more than ever will I need thy assistance. Do not, I implore thee, refuse it ; stand near me in that fearful moment, and, when the last struggle is over, accompany me to the judgment-seat, and there, in union with the Blessed Virgin, plead for me until thou obtainest a favorable sentence, that with thee and my Mother Mary I may enjoy God for all eternity. Amen.

RESOLUTIONS

DURING the course of the day recall to mind the preceding reflections. Repeat from time to time : St. Joseph, patron of a happy death, pray for us.

Detach yourself from the goods of earth, and bestow an alms to-day for that intention.

Bear with the faults of others.

Make some act of mortification in honor of the sufferings of Jesus.

Say an Our Father and Hail Mary once, and St. Joseph, pray for us, three times.

NOVENA

DIRECTIONS FOR EACH DAY OF THE NOVENA. — Begin with the Litany of the Saints, found at the end of the booklet, say the following prayer, recite the Our Father and the Hail Mary three times, and conclude by the Oblation : O holy Joseph ! etc., found at the end of the booklet as well.

NINTH DAY:

HOLY St. Joseph ! you who are that a good and faithful servant to whom God committed the care of his family ; whom he appointed guardian and protector of the life of Jesus Christ, the comfort and support of his holy Mother, and the depositary of his great design of the redemption of mankind ; you who had the happiness of living with Jesus and Mary, and of dying in their arms; chaste spouse of the Mother of God, model and patron of pure souls, humble, patient, and reserved, be moved with the confidence we place in your intercession, and accept with kindness this testimony of our devotion.

We give thanks to God for the signal favor he hath been pleased to confer on you, and we conjure him, through your intercession, to enable us to imitate your virtues. Pray for us, then, O great saint ! and by that love which you had for Jesus and Mary, and by the love which they had for you, 'obtain for us the incomparable happiness of living and dying in the love of Jesus and Mary. Amen.

MARCH 19 - THIRTY-FIRST DAY

BENEFITS DERIVED FROM DEVOTION TO ST. JOSEPH

IN closing this month of St. Joseph, we will form the resolution of reciting each day some prayer in his honor. We will endeavor to form the habit of frequently invoking the sweet names of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, which will serve as . ejaculatory prayers, to be repeated during the day and in the hour of temptation, trial, and danger, when everything seems dark around us, and we feel abandoned by God and man. This practice, together with sacrifices offered daily through the merits of Jesus Christ, in union with his blessed Mother and our dear father, St. Joseph, will aid us in keeping the resolutions formed during this month, and serve as incentives to our spiritual progress. Various examples have been set before us

for our encouragement, and from which we are to select those most suitable to our station in life as rules for our future conduct. The author of the "Imitation of Christ" justly observes that "without sacrifice we cannot live the life of love." Our progress in virtue will be according to the violence offered to self. Those souls, then, that are really desirous of advancing in perfection should endeavor to be penetrated with the precious lesson, applicable to every condition of life, and suitable to the acquirement of all Christian virtue. When, at the close of day, we find that we have done nothing for the glory of God, we may justly say with the pagan emperor, Titus, who, regretting that no occasion of pleasing or benefiting others had been given him, exclaimed, "I have lost a day." Following the example of many devout clients of St. Joseph, let us choose Wednesday in each week as a day on which to render special homage to him, and endeavor to assist at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass on that day. St. Francis de Sales calls the Mass the sun of spiritual exercises, centre of Christian religion, heart of devotion, soul of piety, and abyss of divine charity, in which God, applying the merits of His precious blood, communicates to us His special graces and favors. If on that day we have not the happiness of making a sacramental Communion, we should at least make a spiritual one, which may be done by ardently desiring to receive our Lord at the moment when the priest and faithful communicate, offering to Him sentiments of humility, respect, and love, imploring the forgiveness of our sins and the grace of being more faithful in future. In fine, during the course of the day, beg St. Joseph to offer all your actions to the Blessed Virgin, and through her to Jesus, that they may be offered by this divine Mediator to His Heavenly Father. We will strive to be faithful each year to the practices laid down in the month of St. Joseph, and during the month select a few days on which, in retreat, we may review the principal actions of our past life.

APPENDIX - PRAYERS FOR EVERY DAY OF THE NOVENA

LITANY OF ST. JOSEPH

LORD, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
Christ, hear us. Christ, graciously hear us.
God, the Father of Heaven, Have mercy on us.
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, Have mercy on us.
God the Holy Ghost, Have mercy on us.
Holy Trinity, one God, Have mercy on us.

Holy Mary, Spouse of Joseph,
Holy Joseph, Spouse of the Virgin Mary,
Nursing-father of Jesus,
Man according to God's own heart,
Faithful and prudent servant,
Guardian of the virginity of Mary,
Companion and solace of Mary,
Most pure in virginity,
Most profound in humility,
Most fervent in charity,
Most exalted in contemplation,
Who wast declared to be a just man by the testimony of the Holy
Ghost Himself,
Who wast enlightened above all in heavenly mysteries,
Who wast the chosen minister of the counsels of the Most High,
Who wast taught from above the mystery of the Incarnate Word,
Who didst journey to Bethlehem with Mary, thy spouse,
Who, finding no place in the inn, didst betake thyself to a stable,
Who wast thought worthy to be present when Christ was born and
laid in a manger,
Who didst bear in thine arms the Son of God,
Who didst receive the blood of Jesus at His circumcision,
Who didst present Him to His Father in the temple, with Mary, His
Mother,
Who, at the warning of the angel, didst fly into Egypt with the child
and His Mother,
Who, when Herod was dead, didst re turn with them into the land of
Israel,
Who for three days, with Mary, His Mother, didst seek sorrowing the
child Jesus when He was lost at Jerusalem,
Who, after three days, didst with joy find Him sitting in the midst of
the doctors,
Who hadst the Lord of lords subject to thee on the earth,
Who wast the happy witness of His hidden life and sacred words,
Who didst die in the arms of Jesus and Mary,
Whose praise is in the Gospel: The spouse of Mary, of whom was
born Jesus,
Humble imitator of the Incarnate Word,

Pray for us

Powerful support of the Church,

Our advocate, St. Joseph, hear us.
Our patron, St. Joseph, graciously hear us.
In all our necessities,
In all our distresses,
In the hour of death,
Through thy most chaste espousals,
Through thy paternal care and fidelity,
Through thy love of Jesus and Mary,
Through thy labors and toils,
Through all thy virtues,
Through thy exalted honor and eternal blessedness,

St. Joseph, help us

Through thy faithful intercession

We, thy clients, beseech thee, hear us.
That thou wouldst vouchsafe to obtain for us from Jesus the pardon
of our sin,
That thou wouldst vouchsafe to commend us faithfully to Jesus and
Mary,
That thou wouldst vouchsafe to obtain for all, both virgins and
married, the chastity belonging to their state,
That thou wouldst vouchsafe to obtain for all congregations perfect
love and concord,
That thou wouldst vouchsafe to direct all rulers and prelates in the
government of their subjects,
That thou wouldst vouchsafe to assist ' all parents in the Christian
education of their children,
That thou wouldst vouchsafe to protect all those that rely upon thy
patronage,
That thou wouldst vouchsafe to support, with thy paternal help, all
congregations instituted under thy name and patronage,
That thou wouldst vouchsafe to visit and stand by us with Jesus and
Mary in the last moment of our life,
That thou wouldst vouchsafe to succor, by thy prayers and
intercession, all the faithful departed,
O chaste spouse of Mary,
O faithful nursing-father of Jesus,
Holy Joseph,

We beseech thee, hear us

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. Christ, hear us. Christ, graciously hear us.

Pray for us, O blessed Joseph! that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us Pray.

GOD ! who didst choose St. Joseph to be the spouse of Blessed Mary, ever virgin, and to be the guardian and fosterfather of Thy beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, we humbly beseech Thee to grant us, through his patronage and merits, such purity of mind and body that, being clean from every stain and clothed with the true marriage-garment, we may, by Thy great mercy, be admitted to the heavenly nuptials : through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

O God ! who in thine ineffable providence didst vouchsafe to choose blessed Joseph to be the spouse of Thy most holy Mother, grant, we beseech Thee, that we may be made worthy to receive him for our intercessor in heaven whom on earth we venerate as our holy protector : who livest and reignest, world without end. Amen.

Guardian of virgins and father, holy Joseph, to whose faithful custody Christ Jesus, very Innocence, and Mary, Virgin of virgins, were committed, I pray and beg of thee by these dear pledges, Jesus and Mary, free me from all uncleanness, and make me, with spotless mind, pure heart, and chaste body ever most chastely to serve Jesus and Mary all the days of my life. Amen.

A VOTIVE OBLATION TO ST. JOSEPH, TO CHOOSE HIM FOR OUR PATRON

HOLY Joseph ! virgin spouse of the Virgin Mother of God, most glorious advocate of all such as are in danger or in their last agony, and most faithful protector of all the servants of Mary, your dearest

Spouse, I, N., in the presence of Jesus and Mary, do, from this moment, choose you for my powerful patron and advocate, in order that I may obtain the grace of a most happy death ; I firmly resolve and purpose never to forsake you, nor to say or do anything against your honor. Receive me, therefore, for your constant servant, and recommend me to the constant protection of Mary, your dear est Spouse, and to the everlasting mercies of Jesus, my Saviour. Assist me in all the actions of my life ; I now offer them to the greater and everlasting glory of Jesus and Mary, as well as to your own. Amen.



PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH, TO OBTAIN THE SPIRIT OF OUR VOCATION

GLORIOUS St. Joseph ! chaste spouse of Mary, our good Mother, and nursing-father of Jesus, our amiable Saviour ; humbly prostrate at your feet, we choose you anew for our good father, and beg you to receive us among the members of your privileged children.

We thank you with our whole heart for having given us a place in this holy family, of which you are the protector as the father. Burning with the desire of responding worthily to our holy vocation, we conjure you, with the most filial confidence, to obtain for us its spirit and virtues. Yes, great saint, grant that, following your example, we may every day make new progress in humility, obedience, recollection, the spirit of poverty, and, above all, in the love of Jesus and Mary.

May we, like you, find our delight in serving this sweet Jesus in the person of His suffering members, as you had the happiness of serving Him in His own person. Deign to crown all your favors by obtaining for us the grace to die like you in the arms of Jesus and Mary, that we may go to share your happiness in the company of our beloved sisters who have gone before us, and who await us near you in the heavenly country. Amen.