

Year of Saint Joseph



Saint Joseph: Love in Action

Guardian of The Holy Family

With a Father's Heart

Editor's Voice

The year 2021 marks the 150th anniversary of the proclamation of St. Joseph as the Patron of the Universal Church. To honour this anniversary, Pope Francis declared 2021 as the "Year of St. Joseph." In his Apostolic Letter, "Patris Corde" ('With a Father's Heart') the Holy Father reflects on the multifaceted role of St. Joseph. The purpose of this letter is to increase our love for this great saint, to encourage us to implore his intercession and to imitate his virtues.

St. Joseph goes unnoticed but is an intercessor and guide in times of trouble. Pope Francis points out that during the pandemic it was ordinary people like doctors, nurses, volunteers, etc. who acted like St. Joseph offering love, care and hope to others. We must learn from St. Joseph to protect the poor, the sick, the needy and to love the Church. In all life's situations, St. Joseph trusted God

totally and accepted Mary as his spouse unconditionally. Besides being the guardian of Jesus and Mary, he is also the guardian of the Holy Church and is likened to the earthly shadow of the 'Heavenly Father'.

This issue of the CHALLENGE attempts to elucidate the numerous virtues of St. Joseph and reminds us that we have a great ally and powerful intercessor in heaven. May this year bring renewal in our Church and help each of us grow in holiness by imitating St. Joseph, who was inspired by God's word: "Don't be afraid, have faith."



Ms. Dorothea D'Costa

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Publisher and Editor: Ms. Dorothea D'Costa Designing and Layout: Sch. Joswalt SJ

Editorial Team: Fr. Anand D'Souza, SJ, Fr. Amit D'Souza, SJ, Fr. Anderson Fernandes, SJ, Charlene Farrell, Dr. Edith Melo Furtado, Sch. Glinson Fernandes, SJ, Fr. Hector Almeida, SJ, Fr. Malcolm Barreto, SJ, Sch. Mark Fizardo, SJ, Fr. Merwin D'Souza, SJ, Sr. Dr. Rita Paes, DHM, Fr. Dr. Roland Coelho, SJ, Dr. Silvia Noronha

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Cover photo: Saint Joseph

St Joseph: Love In Action



"Love changes everything". The world has always needed love. Today, as in all the critical moments of the world's history, when wars, famines and plagues have assailed, plundered and killed, when all man's material possessions and attributes have come to naught, only one thing has remained. It is indestructible, it has a rebirth even where it seems to be dead, like an incandescent ember waiting to be rekindled. That is Love.

When the Holy Father declared a year of St Joseph, the hidden ember among glowing cinders has been lifted from among the ash heap of our lives and turned into a bright—searchlight which we knew existed but—hardly turned to. Speaking for myself, as a child, my mother taught me to say a prayer in Portuguese: "Jesus, Mary, Joseph, come to our aid, help us, give us grace and good health to me, my parents, siblings ..." and the list could go on according to the need of the moment. A simple, innocent prayer which said it all. On the journey ahead, I did remain faithful to Jesus and Mary but forgot the way to the Head of the Holy family. As St Augustin regretted,

on his conversion and cried out plaintively to the Lord: "Late have I loved you", so is my cry today to St Joseph, the earthly father of Jesus: " Late am I in search of you!"

St Joseph is a treasure hidden in the Bible. Like all hidden treasures you have to look for him and in those few times he is mentioned, he leaves a strong impact on the seeker for one finds a rare pearl of holiness. The Gospel of Mathew (1:16) gives a summary introduction to Joseph: "Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah." His identity is no more than whose son and husband he was. Even his relationship with Jesus is glossed over, as the identity of Jesus is described only in

relation to Mary. Perhaps the label of 'foster father' is missing.

The Gospel of Luke (3:23) refers to Jesus as "He was the son (as was thought) of Joseph." This parenthesis

about the fatherhood of Joseph leads to much reflection on his God given mission, his humble and unquestioning acceptance and all the human and spiritual drama that he surely faced in fulfilling a role that would be unacceptable to any other man. Even Mary expressed her confusion at the words of the Angel: "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" (Luke 1:34). Joseph asks no questions about the most problematic situations put forth to him in his dreams.

Joseph's response is of a man who thinks and acts out of love and obedience. The Love of God, the divine source of all love is based on obedience to His commands: "Those who love me will keep my word" (John 14:23). Like Mary's, his was also an "obedience of faith" (Rom 1:5). Joseph's only attributes explicitly mentioned in the Bible are summed up in two words: "a righteous man." (Mt 1:19) Inspite of this minimal description of Joseph, more can be said of him rather than less. Letting go of Mary, quietly, acting in her interest is the greatest proof of love.

He surely looked forward to a life of togetherness. He certainly was lost in an internal conflict between his conviction of Mary's virtue and these unexplainable circumstances. He was no ordinary man who would have felt betrayed and humiliated. It requires a great act of selfless love to do what Joseph planned to do and greater love still to listen, believe and act on a heavenly message conveyed in his dream. Joseph immediately took loving care of Mary as they awaited the birth of Jesus . The journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem (Lk 2:4), to register the family, the search for a place for the birth of Jesus, great must have been Joseph's anxiety wanting to do only the best for Mary and their child. With Mary, he participated in the salvific plan, he was the guardian of the same love, the Redeemer.

Joseph is the epitome of an active, dynamic love, enveloped in a silent, interior life. A love that grows and is nurtured in silence. As the patron saint of the Universal Church, families have much to learn from him. Joseph found in the Holy Spirit, the Giver of Life, the source of sublime conjugal love, made of renunciation, almost impossible in a purely human heart. In the Holy family, marital and virginal love are made one. Jesus grew up in this model home headed by a strong, silent and caring husband and father. He protected Mary from public disgrace through the ultimate gift of love, his 'self-gift', sheltered his divine Son from Herod's evil plan.

"Work was the daily expression of love in the life of the Family of Nazareth... At the workbench where he plied his trade together with Jesus, Joseph brought human work closer to the mystery of the Redemption." (Redemptoris Custos (Guardian of the Redeemer). JP II, 1989). Joseph and Mary, the chosen ones in the plan of salvation, yet so little mentioned in Scripture, led a life sanctified by obedience and keeping things that perhaps they could not understand in their heart. Jesus spent his hidden years and grew into maturity and holiness, nurtured by the alliance of silence and abounding love of his parents.



Dr. Edith Melo Furtado is a Professor Emerita of French in the Goa University



Saint Joseph: A Guardian Of The Holy Family

The church celebrates 2021 as the Year of St Joseph to commemorate the 150th anniversary of St Joseph being solemnly declared Patron of the Catholic Church by Pope Pius IX in his decree Quemadmodum Deus.

It's indeed an irony that the most silent man of the salvation history is being accorded an honour in a covid-silenced church. This is really a great sign because if St Joseph were to be here in his human form to see the usual fanfare with which saints are celebrated, he definitely would've felt ill-at-ease. Looking at the pandemic scenario around the world, the year dedicated to St Joseph may go by without much of an outward celebration. But that is maybe how God wills it of the saint whom the Polish writer Jan Dobraczynski describes as "a

father in the shadows". But St Joseph is a wonderful example of how someone who remained in the shadows and nearly went unnoticed, played an unmatched role in the history of salvation.

God chose St Joseph to be the spouse of the Blessed Virgin and the legal father of the Son of God. He sheltered the two most holiest and sinless people on the face of this earth as the head of the Holy Family.

His silent but powerful role in the entire plan of salvation cannot be undermined. As a descendant of David from whose line Jesus was to take up a human form according to the promise made to David by the prophet Nathan

and by becoming the spouse of Mary of Nazareth, Saint Joseph has the unique distinction of the connect between the Old and New Testaments.

Through all of this, Joseph feared over what had befallen him. But God's will and His plan were at work and thus we see Joseph, by his example, teaching us that faith in God helps us to work through our fears, our frailties a n d o u r p e r c e i v e d incompetences. Amidst the toil and turmoil of life, God steers our course and He is in complete



control if only we surrender to His will like St Joseph. He accepted Mary unconditionally trusting in the angel's words and made the decision to protect her at all costs - the model husband in a world where many a women are not valued as a person. Also he is the perfect model of a father - silent, toiling for the family and watched his son grow daily "in wisdom and in years and in divine and human favour"(Luke 2:52) His gift of fortitude as a family man is indeed a virtue worth emulating for all times. The Venerable Pope Pius XII says, "If Joseph was so engaged, heart and soul, in protecting and providing for that little family at Nazareth, don't you think that now in heaven he is the same loving father and guardian of the whole Church, of all its members, as he was of its Head on earth?"

That's the reason we need to run to St Joseph for guidance and creative courage to turn a problem into a possibility by trusting always in divine providence. His dedication to his profession as a carpenter to provide for his family is emphasised in the first social encyclical - Pope Leo XIII's Rerum Novarum. St Joseph is an exemplary patron of one's realisation of the importance of dignity of labour which is why he is primarily called St Joseph the worker apart from being known as the spouse of the Blessed Virgin. He was also declared as the Patron of the Catholic Church because he kept unceasing watch over his family in Nazareth which, in a sense, is a microcosm of the Church of Christ.

The focus on St Joseph also gains relevance this year in worldwide pandemic situation which has thrown up a challenge to migrant workers especially in India. They had left their native lands to escape persecution due to poverty and gone in search of work and better pastures but are now staring at uncertainty in the absence of

work. St Joseph was forced to leave Bethlehem and flee to Egypt to protect his little family and then settle down in Nazareth instead. He is thus an outstanding model for migrant workers who have had to leave home and hearth to earn a living in a foreign land and support their families. May he give strength and protection to them and inspire them to sustain themselves and their families living outside their "terra-firma".

The silent father of our Lord Jesus played a decisive role in the upbringing of his Divine Child. St Joseph is hardly mentioned in the Gospel texts. He preferred to remain in the background to highlight the larger plan and picture of salvation that was to unfold for mankind. It reminds us of what John the Baptist said of Jesus - He must increase, I must decrease (John 3:30) Much before him, the father of our Lord would've had this thought upmost on his mind as he nurtured and cared for his son. How many fathers or parents would profess to do this in modern times? Social media handles such as Instagram, Facebook and Twitter abound in much-ado-about-nothing posts about parents "hoisting" their children for records sake. Here we have a simple, unassuming man - St Joseph, who "followed his dreams" and allowed God's salvific will to prevail.

It is then, a wonderful opportunity for all the faithful in the Church to increase our love for St Joseph especially during this special year, grow in knowledge about him and thus "to encourage us to implore his intercession and to imitate his virtues and his zeal".(Patris Corde)

Fr. Anand D'Souza, SJ is the Superior and Incharge of the Pre-Primary at St. Britto HS, Mapusa



What Do I learn From Saint Joseph



"I also want to tell you something very personal. I really like St. Joseph, because he is a strong and silent man. On my desk I have a picture of St. Joseph sleeping. And while he's sleeping, he takes care of the Church! Yup! He can do it, we know that. And when I have a problem, a difficulty, I write a piece of paper and put it under St. Joseph, because he dreams about it! This gesture means: pray for this problem!"(www.holyart.com)

This is what Pope Francis said on January 16, 2015 to the families gathered in the Mall of Asia Arena in Manila. It was a beautiful scene of So the very first thing that glares through

simple and profound devotion which has prompted many faithful Italians to follow the example of the Pope and to put a statue of St. Joseph sleeping, in their home.

It is an unusual image for us, but very common among the Latin American faithful: a statue of St. Joseph sleeping. But now, I am sure this event has been a catalyst to what I have personally witnessed, among copious people around me, who have fostered a certain fondness towards this image of St Joseph.

this simple saint is his extraordinary sensitivity to the voice of God. Scripture tells us that St Joseph heard the voice of the Lord through the angels in his dreams (Mt 1:20-21; 2:13-14; 2:19-20) i.e. when he was asleep. He was thus able to know what he needed to do. And he followed the Lord's command with utter fidelity.



Sensitivity to the voice of God.

His diligent effecting of God's will is another jewel that crowned his persona. God's will was not easy.

- P To accept Mary who seemed to have conceived through the power of the holy Spirit. (Lk 1:26ff)
- P To travel in such harsh conditions to Bethlehem. (Lk 2:3-4)
- P To flee to Egypt from Herod's wrath. (Mt 2:13ff)

- P To settle down in Nazareth for the rest of his life. (Mt 2:22-23)
- P To father a son who already has a Father. (Lk 2:49-50)

Faithful adherence to God's will.

The role that St Joseph plays in the History of Salvation is enormous. His responsibility was not easy. His

involvement with Jesus is as intimate as was the intimacy shared by Jesus and Mother Mary. But, how little is the reference made to this great man. Yet, the dearth of scriptural narrative does not silence his profound contribution to God's immersion with us. We certainly do not have to proclaim what we do from the mountain tops. We have St Joseph who sets forth an example.

A silent worker.

To conceive a child before marriage was certainly an abominable offence. It was the most detestable among all other immoralities. The consequence

was certainly public stoning to death. When St Joseph who was betrothed to Mary found her to be with a child, his heart certainly sank. Like all the Jews he certainly couldn't accept the fact. And the normal reaction was that of handing her over to the Jewish authorities and deal with her according to the law. But here we encounter a man with a compassionate heart. Humanly it is certainly an impossible leap of faith to truly accept a virgin conception. But above all we see here a man whose compassion over shadowed his own

legal inclination-which was an imperative virtue for a faithful Jew. 'He resolves to send her away quietly' (Mt 1:19).



A man with a compassionate heart.

In the context of relationships which is so vital for all of us let me quote the very words of Archbishop Fulton Sheen from his book, 'The World's First Love. He says, "the type of marriage which took place between Mary and Joseph; it was such as the stars have, whose light unites in the atmosphere, though the stars themselves do not; a marriage like the flowers in the garden in springtime, who give forth perfume, though they themselves do not touch; a marriage like an orchestration where a great melody is produced, but where one instrument is without contact with the other. In such a marriage the use of the right to another is surrendered for a higher purpose. Mary wanted to know

how she could be a virgin and a mother, and Joseph wanted to know how he could be a virgin and a father. It took an angel to reassure both that God had

> found a way. Only those who listen to angels' voices can pierce that mystery. How much more beautiful Mary and Joseph become when we see in their lives what might be called the first Divine Romance. God loves bellowing waterfalls, but I believe He loves them better not when they overflow and drown His flowers, but when they are harnessed and bridled to light a city and to slake the thirst of a child. Not then in Joseph and Mary do we find one pure controlled waterfall and one dried-up lake, but rather two youths who before

they knew the beauty of the one, and the handsome strength of the other, willed to surrender it for the 'passionless passion' and 'wild tranquillity' of Jesus."

A chaste companion.

So here's the Challenge, to be like St Joseph.

- # To be sensitive to the voice of God.
- # To faithfully accomplish the will of God in our life.
- # To humbly do what we are called to do.
- # To be compassionate to one another.

Fr. Amit D'Souza, SJ a Jesuit, Incharge of the Health Care Facility



With a Father's Heart



Pope Francis has proclaimed this "Year of Saint Joseph" with the Apostolic Letter "Patris corde" (with a father's heart) marking the 150th anniversary of Blessed Pope Pius IX's declaration of St Joseph as the Patron of the Universal Church. Pope Francis wrote this apostolic letter against the background of the covid-19 pandemic. The Holy Father acknowledged the contribution made by simple people who did not make headlines: they—nurses, doctors, caregivers, volunteers, nuns, priests, religious, public safety officials, and so on—served selflessly and generously. They spread responsibility, not panic. They prayed and encouraged others to pray. "Each of us can discover in

Joseph - the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence an intercessor, a support and a guide in times of trouble."

Chris Lowney has documented many Jesuits and friends of Jesuits who provided Heroic Leadership. Many of our contemporaries certainly do great things for God and are acknowledged for their tremendous contributions to the world. And then there are many "Josephs" who keep the world moving in the right direction, working day in and day out, looking after the nitty-gritty of community life or family life and mission. Just as St Joseph was the beloved, tender, obedient father, a father who was in the shadows and yet creatively courageous, so also there are



teaches us the "value, dignity, and joy" of work. In this Ignatian Year, like St Joseph, let us learn to be "the earthly shadow of the heavenly Father" (PC, 7). Pope Francis concludes his Apostolic Letter with a prayer to Saint Joseph:

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

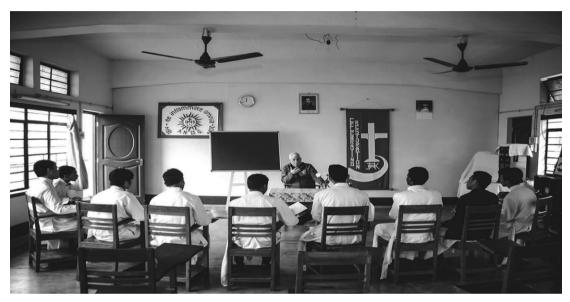
and defend us from every evil. Amen.

discreet and hardworking people who operate kitchens, farms, parishes, schools, retreat houses, offices, social centres, and so on with a spirit of magnanimity. Unheralded, they consolidate the missions that were started by the pioneers.

St Joseph "has always been venerated as a father by the Christian people" (PC #1), helping the little boy Jesus to experience the tender love of God even as he grew up. Despite his uncertainties, Joseph cooperated with the great mystery of Redemption with his "fiat" saving Mary and the baby Jesus. In the midst of our weaknesses, fears, and frailties, God still invites us to join in the mission of Love. All Christians are called to share Christ's love with everyone. Whatever work we do, we do to God's greater glory. Joseph's honest work as a carpenter



A Guide To Jesuit Formation; Novitiate



A man is a Jesuit the day he enters the novitiate. (The word "novitiate" can refer to both this period of formation and the building in which the formation takes place.) And here's the first common mistake that journalists make: You don't become a Jesuit when you take vows or when you are ordained; you are one on **entrance day.** This is one of the three dates on Jesuit tombstones:

Birth Date, Entrance Date, Day of Death. (By the way, we usually call men considering entering, or applying to, the Jesuits candidates.) There are Jesuit novices who are brothers and scholastics (the latter being men planning for ordination). Technically, a Jesuit enters the novitiate "indifferent" to his ultimate vocation, as brother or

priest. The first two weeks of novitiate are **postulancy**, when the men are called **postulants**. The head of the novitiate is the **novice director** or **novice master**.

After postulancy, the novices enter into the two-year novitiate program of prayer, work and learning about the Society of Jesus, which includes making (or doing) the Long Retreat or Thirty-Day Retreat, i.e., the full Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola, in their first year, which is a month-long silent retreat. (In the novitiate, first year men are called primi; second year men are secundi. Jesuits often refer to men in their year as their **classmates**. Or they will say of someone in the class behind them. "He was one of my **primi**.") The novices also engage in a variety of experiments, that is, working in various ministries, usually with the poor or with the sick, sometimes in the developing world; in their second year the novices go on a long experiment, an extended (severalmonth) ministry at a Jesuit apostolate, often a Jesuit school. In some provinces the novices will also make a **pilgrimage** across the country with little money.

The program and/or the building is the "novitiate," the people are "novices." The novice is **Mr. or Br. John Smith, N.S.J.** until...

First Vows: A Jesuit pronounces (makes, takes) his First Vows (poverty, chastity and obedience) at the conclusion of his two years of novitiate, during a Vow Mass. Technically, the Jesuit is promising to enter the Society fully, at the end of his training. (And you have been living the vows since entrance date.) The man is then a vowed Jesuit or "has yows." Each stage of formation (including entrance and approval for First Vows) is predicated on the approval by the provincial (and the further you get in formation, that may also include approval by the Jesuit superior general, and for ordination, the Vatican). The men about to take vows

are called the **vovendi**. Traditionally, each Jesuit receives a small metal **vow cross**, as a sign of his commitment. In some U.S. provinces, the Jesuit is buried with his vow cross; in others, the vow crosses are handed down from deceased Jesuits to the newly vowed men. The Jesuit at this point is Mr. or Fr. James Martins SJ, Br. John Smith, S.J.

American Jesuit Priest Article Written on 11th August 2013



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Website: www.goajesuits.com

Jesuit Profiles

Name: Fr. Savio Abreu, SJ Date of Birth: June 12, 1972

Place of Birth: Goa

School: Don Bosco HS, Panjim **College:** Dhempe, Miramar

Masters/PG: M.A.Sociology, Pune University

Doctorate; PHD "New Christain movements in Goa: A Sociological

Analysis" from IIT, Bombay

Place of Novitiate: XTC, Desur

Place of Philosophy: Satya Nilayam, Chennai

Place of Theology: Vidya Jyoti, Delhi Date of Ordination: December 28, 2003

Present Ministry: Principal of St. Paul's HS, Belgaum, Intellectual Apostolate (Research)

What do you like the best of the Society of Jesus/Jesuits:

The Society of Jesus gives every Jesuit the freedom, the space and the opportunities to realize

his vocation and potential to the full, to achieve magis (best) in all his activities.

Short description of your Vocation to the Society of Jesus:

 $My\ vocation\ story\ has\ been\ a\ wonderful\ journey\ with\ many\ adventures\ and\ anecdotes.\ I\ don't$

know how time has flown by in my 26 years of religious life.

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St. Francis Xavier was the First Jesuit Missionary to India.

Come; let us pray with the Pope!

INTRODUCTION

Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network (PWPN/ Apostleship of Prayer) is an ecclesial service of the Holy See entrusted to the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits). It's Mission is to mobilize Christians through prayer and action for the challenges of humanity and of the mission of the Church. These challenges are discerned by the Pope, and are expressed under the form of Prayer Intentions (see below) which he entrusts to the entire Church. PWPN has as it's foundation the spirituality of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a spirituality for mission. It is present in 98 countries in the world with 35 million Catholics. This year the PWPN celebrates 175 years of it's foundation.

POPE'S PRAYER INTENTIONS

Note: Kindly whisper a small prayer when you read each of the Intentions below.

OCTOBER

Evangelization: Missionary disciples

We pray that every baptized person may be engaged in Evangelization, available to the mission, by being witnesses of a life that has the flavour of the Gospel.

NOVEMBER

Universal: People who suffer from depression

We pray that people who suffer from depression or burn-out will find support and a light that opens them up to life.

DECEMBER

Universal: Catechists

Let us pray for the catechists, summoned to announce the Word of God:may they be its witnesses, with courage and creativity and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

> Join the Pope's Prayer Group: www.clicktopray.org www.thepopevideo.org



Pedru Arrupe Institute, Raia

Pedru Arrupe Institute (PAI) is a centre for Ignatian Spirituality. The mission of PAI is to promote Ignatian Spirituality and help accompany people along their faith journey. This institute is run by the Jesuits of the Goa Province of the Society of Jesus. The campus is located in very scenic surroundings.

It offers retreats and courses on spirituality, scripture, and theology for the religious as well as the laity. In the past it has conducted various courses for the Ignatian laity. The young and the old have benefitted a lot from courses like 'Discernment of Spirit,' 'Freedom and Commitment,' 'How to Pray' and so on. Apart from such courses, retreats are also conducted for different people.



Many groups are a part of PAI such as the 'Young Professionals' and the 'Magis group'. They are regular attendees of the different programs held for them. Holy week retreat, passion retreat and recollection are a part of the annual activities held at PAI. You are welcome to Pedru Arrupe Institute to deepen your faith and experience a renewed.

Fr.Pedro Rodrigues SJ





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8459787252 challengejesuits@gmail.com

Challenge, Jesuit House, 14/A, Travessa de Revolução, Panaji - Goa 403 001