

# **St. Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church**

## ***Next to Mary, the Greatest Saint***

During periods of stress and trial -- chiefly when every lawlessness of act seems permitted to the powers of darkness -- it has been the custom in the Church to plead with special fervor and perseverance to God, her author and protector, by recourse to the intercession of the saints -- and chiefly of the Blessed Virgin, Mother of God -- whose patronage has ever been the most efficacious. **The fruit of these pious prayers and of the confidence reposed in the Divine goodness, has always, sooner or later, been made apparent. Now, Venerable Brethren, you know the times in which we live; they are scarcely less deplorable for the Christian religion than the worst days, which in time past were most full of misery to the Church. We see faith, the root of all the Christian virtues, lessening in many souls; we see charity growing cold; the young generation daily growing in depravity of morals and views; the Church of Jesus Christ attacked on every side by open force or by craft; a relentless war waged against the Sovereign Pontiff; and the very foundations of religion undermined with a boldness which waxes daily in intensity. These things are, indeed, so much a matter of notoriety that it is needless for Us to expatiate [elaborate] on the depths to which society has sunk in these days, or on the designs which now agitate the minds of men. In circumstances so unhappy and troublous, human remedies are insufficient, and it becomes necessary, as a sole resource, to beg for assistance from the Divine power.**

**(Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII, *QuamQuam Pluries*, "On Devotion to St. Joseph," promulgated August 15, 1889.)**

If one did not see the date of this promulgation, 1889, one would think the Pope was speaking of our own day. How precisely Pope Leo XIII's words are echoed in Our Lord's locutions with Sister Mildred Mary Ephrem Neuzil of the "Our Lady of America®" message already in the early 1940's, barely more than fifty years after this encyclical was promulgated. How Jesus laments the lack of Faith in the world and the failure of those responsible for youth to teach them adequately about Him. Do not Mary and Joseph address obedience to Christ's Vicar on earth, and warn of false prophets, false teachings, false messiahs? Is not the Church under great attack from varied sources without and from disobedience and divisiveness from within? Can we not see before our eyes the vision of St. John Bosco of the Church under attack from all sides?

**My little white dove, do you know what I find most lacking in the world today? It is FAITH. There are so few souls that believe in Me and My love. They profess their belief and their love, but they do not live this belief. Their hearts are cold, for without faith there can be no love.**

**My daughter, I am not loved in the homes of men. And because I am not loved, the Divine Trinity refuses to dwell therein. Children are not taught to love Me, because those who have charge over them have no**

**time or patience to do so.** (Sister Mildred Mary Ephrem Neuzil, Diary, "Our Lady of America®," Fostoria, Ohio, pg. 5)

This message of "Our Lady of America®" is a message of Mother Mary's compassion for her children and of Abba God's faithfulness to His people, Christ's Church, bound together by the reciprocity of covenant. It is a message of **dire warning and encouraging promise, so much like the warnings of the prophets of Scripture**, pleading for **repentance** from our lives of idolatry and compromise in order to satisfy the perfect **justice** of God, and promising complete **restoration and renewal** in God's favor for those who are faithful and repentant, for such is the infinite **mercy** of God. God never fails on His side of the Covenant, but we certainly do on ours. False prophets, false messiahs and heresy, flowing from intellectual pride, lust for power, self will and disobedience to God's will as expressed in Christ's Vicar on earth, have plagued the Church since its beginning. Every age knows the depth of Satan's assaults, but every age knows, too, Christ's promise that **the gates of hell will not prevail against His Church**. Jesus always has the first and the last word, for He is **The Word** of God, the one word in which everything is contained.

The Book of Daniel confirms God's special protection of His people in the guardianship of his most exalted angel, Michael, the supreme knight of the angelic guard protecting God's honor and God's interests. Today, God's people which is Christ's Church, enjoy that same protection from St. Michael given to the chosen people of old. The Book of Daniel speaks also of the angel Gabriel working alongside Michael to protect the chosen race. "Our Lady of America®" speaks as well of a whole host of angels, including Angel Sultra and Archangel Sardus--guardian angels of America, so like the guardian angel of Portugal revealed at Fatima-- who will help Michael, Gabriel and us, in union with Mary and Joseph and all the saints, in carrying out the heavenly mandate that has been given to America to **lead the world back to BOTH Faith AND Purity**. Knowing how vicious can be the attacks of Satan, God saw fit to give Christ's Church another guardian, also of the highest court of heaven and of singular privilege and favor before the throne of God, who, although human, is higher than all the angels. This guardian's name is Joseph, a humble and just man, who, next to Mary, Christ's mother, is the most important and greatest human person on the face of the earth. Mary and Joseph, because of their unique and singular roles as co-redeemers with Christ in the plan of salvation for all mankind, are higher than all the hosts of heaven in power and favor before God. Hence, their intercession and protection are of the utmost importance to all of us individually and to all of us collectively as the Church, God's adopted family.

Joseph and his dear spouse, Mary, constitute with Jesus that awesome hypostatic order of grace that makes possible the hypostatic union of God with man in the person of Jesus, the Incarnation which God deemed necessary for our salvation. In the order of nature the angels are higher than Mary and Joseph for they are **created pure spirits** which is most like unto to God Who is **uncreated Pure Spirit**. **The closer one is to God the greater one is**. In the order of grace, however, Mary and Joseph, created beings with **both matter and spirit** which is a lower form of life than pure spirits, are nonetheless higher than the angels precisely because of their greater proximity to God in their most exalted vocations. Mary carried God in her womb and gave Him her very flesh. Joseph shared in her grace as putative [generally regarded as] and legal father of Jesus on

earth, making them essential to the work of Redemption willed by God to come to us by way of the family. Thus was made possible the Revelation of God's Love in the Word Made Flesh and thus was provided for God Incarnate a home among us in the family of man. Angels cannot be a mother or a father to the Sacred Humanity. These unique roles give them a most holy communion with God in Jesus greater than any other creatures can know.

See previous newsletter [http://www.ourladyofamerica.com/the\\_message/The\\_Sacred\\_Humanity.pdf](http://www.ourladyofamerica.com/the_message/The_Sacred_Humanity.pdf)

St. Joseph addresses his role as co-redeemer with Jesus and Mary thus:

**My heart suffered with the hearts of Jesus and Mary. Mine was a silent suffering, for it was my special vocation to hide and shield, as long as God willed, the Virgin Mother and her Son from the malice and hatred of men.**

**The most painful of my sorrows was that I knew beforehand of their passions, yet would not be there to console them. Their future suffering was ever present to me and became my daily cross. I became, in union with my holy spouse, co-redemptor of the human race. Through compassion for the sufferings of Jesus and Mary I co-operated, as no other, in the salvation of the world.** (Diary, pg. 13)

Because of Mary's call to be Mother of the Redeemer and Joseph's to be Custodian of the Redeemer, the legal father of Jesus on earth standing in the place of God the Father, both Mary and Joseph were given singular privileges not given to any other creatures. With that first singular grace of her Divine Maternity, as Theotokos, God-bearer, Mary became the living Ark of the New Covenant. As the Ark of the Covenant kept in the Holy of Holies of old bore the sacred signs of God's covenant and presence with His people-- manna, the 10 Commandments, and the rod of Aaron, the priest-- so she bears in the Ark of her virgin womb the Living Bread come down from Heaven, He Who is the Law of Love and is the Eternal High Priest, all in One. As that first Ark was made of special acacia wood and lined inside and out with the most precious of metals, gold, so Mary was adorned with God's most precious gifts, divine espousal, divine wisdom, and a fullness of grace and purity that preserved her from the slightest stain of sin or any of its effects; this second singular privilege is her Immaculate Conception, so enhanced with her third singular privilege, her Perpetual Virginity, for with her "fiat" she is like the most unblemished offering set aside for God's purpose and delight alone. She dwelt in Heaven's Holy of Holies, the most sublime Divine Presence that emanated from within her. Her Assumption into heaven (whereby her body was not subject to the decay that results from sin, nor to waiting for the resurrection of the body that comes with final judgment) would be the natural fruit of her three prior singular privileges of grace. Hence she would be crowned Queen Mother of heaven and earth to sit at the right hand of her King Son, Savior of the world. And where Mary is, Joseph her spouse is bound to be as well. Their marriage will be forever a thing of God's incomprehensible splendor and munificence. Jesus, Mary and Joseph become three-in-one love, the earthly trinity that mirrors so perfectly the unity of the heavenly Three-in-One.

Joseph, because he was to be the putative, the legal father of Jesus according to Jewish law, was likewise favored with a singular privilege similar to but lesser than Mary's

in deference to her greater role and greater privilege. **His privilege was being cleansed from original sin and its effects the moment after his conception.** With this cleansing came also an infusion of grace in an abundance only exceeded by the fullness of grace that Mary knew. He spoke of this great grace to Sister Mildred Mary Neuzil in October 1956, about a week after Our Lady's first appearance; she heard but did not see him at this time.

**It is true, my daughter, that immediately after my conception, I was, through the future merits of Jesus and because of my exceptional role of future Virgin-Father, cleansed from the stain of original sin. I was from that moment confirmed in grace and never had the slightest stain on my soul. This is my unique privilege among men.**

**My pure heart also was from the first moment of existence inflamed with love for God. Immediately, at the moment when my soul was cleansed from original sin, grace was infused into it in such abundance that, excluding my holy spouse, I surpassed the holiness of the highest angel in the angelic choir.** (Diary, pg. 13)

Hence, Mary and Joseph, whose unique vocations in the history of man's salvation united them in holy marriage, participated intimately and magnificently in the holiness of God in a preeminent way, by God's own design. Thus as human beings they can speak on our behalf in a marvelous way with the God who favored them so, and being higher than the angels, they can command the angels on behalf of our protection and our needs.

Just as Joseph was chosen to be guardian of the human Christ, so God chose Joseph to be the guardian of Holy Mother Church, the Mystical Christ. Although he was father of the human Jesus by way of the law, he is father of the Mystical Jesus by way of the Spirit of God. Because that role of guarding both Mary and Jesus was so great and carried out with such obedience and solicitude, it is no wonder God chose to make Joseph the Patron and Protector of the Church along with the angels Michael and Gabriel. Again St. Joseph speaks to this issue.

**The privilege of being chosen by God to be the Virgin-Father of His Son was mine alone, and no honor, excluding that bestowed upon my Holy Spouse, was ever, or will ever, be as sublime or as high as this.** (Diary, pg. 28- March 19, 1958)

From earliest Tradition, Joseph was celebrated as guardian of the Holy Family and came to be revered as guardian of God's family on earth as well over time. St. Joseph, son of Jacob, sometimes called Heli, mirrors perfectly the life of the first Joseph, one of the 12 sons of Jacob (Israel), who was sold into slavery in Egypt and who saved the Pharaoh's family and the Egyptian nation, as well as all the other people who sought food in Egypt and, hence, was called "Savior of the world." God spoke to St. Joseph in dreams, just as He did with Joseph of old. While the first Joseph was **sold** into Egypt, St. Joseph was **sent** into Egypt by an angel. While the first Joseph saved his people from physical death from famine by storing up grain for bread, St. Joseph saved us from the spiritual death of sin by preserving for us He Who would become the very Bread of Eternal Life. "Go to Joseph" was the cry of those hungry for food in Egypt. "Go to Joseph" was the cry of the early Church hungry for God. St. Teresa of Avila spoke often of her great devotion to St. Joseph; she claimed that he never failed her and always gave her far more than what she had

asked for. Is it any wonder then that on the feast of the Immaculate Conception, December 8, 1870, Pope Pius IX, who had defined in 1854 that great dogma of Our Lady's Immaculate Conception by which our Nation honors Mary as Protector and Patroness, promulgated his encyclical *Quemadmodum Deus* proclaiming St. Joseph the "Patron and Protector of the Universal Church," saying:

In the same way that he once kept unceasing holy watch over the family of Nazareth, so now does he protect and defend with his heavenly patronage the Church of Christ.

Less than 20 years later, Pope Leo XIII wrote his splendid encyclical letter, *Quamquam Pluries*, "On Devotion to St. Joseph," ending with this prayer:

Most beloved father, dispel the evil of falsehood and sin ...graciously assist us from heaven in our struggle with the powers of darkness...and just as once you saved the Child Jesus from mortal danger, so now defend God's holy Church from the snares of her enemies and from all adversity.

Pope Leo goes on to address his Venerable Brethren to support devotion to Joseph:

That God may be more favorable to Our prayers, and that He may come with bounty and promptitude to the aid of His Church, We judge it of deep utility for the Christian people, continually to invoke with great piety and trust, together with the Virgin-Mother of God, her chaste Spouse, the Blessed Joseph; and We regard it as most certain that this will be most pleasing to the Virgin herself. ... We have seen the devotion to St. Joseph, which in past times the Roman Pontiffs have developed and gradually increased, grow into greater proportions in Our time, particularly after Pius IX, of happy memory, Our predecessor, proclaimed, yielding to the request of a large number of bishops, this holy patriarch the patron of the Catholic Church. And as, moreover, it is of high importance that the devotion to St. Joseph should engraft itself upon the daily pious practices of Catholics, We desire that the Christian people should be urged to it above all by Our words and authority.

Joseph's great dignity and privilege stems from his role as the Spouse of Mary whose dignity is so lofty that nothing created can rank above it, and from his role as the legal father of Jesus. He is **not a foster father** in Hebrew understanding, but as a legal father, has full rights to claim Jesus as his son, even though not the biological father of Jesus. Pope Leo goes on to say in that same encyclical:

And Joseph shines among all mankind by the most august dignity, since by divine will, he was the guardian of the Son of God and reputed as His father among men. Hence it came about that the Word of God was humbly subject to Joseph, that He obeyed him, and that He rendered to him all those offices that children are bound to render to their parents. From this two-fold dignity flowed the obligation which nature lays upon the head of families, so that Joseph became the guardian, the administrator, and the legal defender of the divine house

whose chief he was. And during the whole course of his life he fulfilled those charges and those duties. He set himself to protect with a mighty love and a daily solicitude his spouse and the Divine Infant; regularly by his work he earned what was necessary for the one and the other for nourishment and clothing; he guarded from death the Child threatened by a monarch's jealousy, and found for Him a refuge; in the miseries of the journey and in the bitternesses of exile he was ever the companion, the assistance, and the upholder of the Virgin and of Jesus. Now the divine house which Joseph ruled with the authority of a father, contained within its limits the scarce-born Church. From the same fact that the most holy Virgin is the mother of Jesus Christ is she the mother of all Christians whom she bore on Mount Calvary amid the supreme throes of the Redemption; Jesus Christ is, in a manner, the firstborn of Christians, who by the adoption and Redemption are his brothers. And for such reasons the Blessed Patriarch looks upon the multitude of Christians who make up the Church as confided specially to his trust -- this limitless family spread over the earth, over which, because he is the spouse of Mary and the Father of Jesus Christ he holds, as it were, a paternal authority. It is, then, natural and worthy that as the Blessed Joseph ministered to all the needs of the family at Nazareth and girt it about with his protection, he should now cover with the cloak of his heavenly patronage and defend the Church of Jesus Christ.

To this awesome grace and responsibility of being the special protector of Christ's Church and Christ's Vicar on earth, St. Joseph himself confirms what Popes through the ages already declared and the faithful have long ago understood. Sister Mildred describes for us his appearance on March 19, 1958 and his words.

Then suddenly, as he ceased speaking, I was favored with a unique and marvelous vision of the glorious St. Joseph. He seemed suspended, as it were, a short distance above what had the appearance of a large globe with clouds moving about it. His head was slightly raised, the eyes gazing upward as if in ecstasy. The hands were in a position similar to that of the priest during the celebration of Holy Mass, only they extended upward somewhat more.

The color of his hair as also of his rather small and slightly forked beard seemed a very dark brown. His eyes resembled in color the hair and beard. He was clothed in a white robe that reached to his ankles. Over this he wore a sort of cloak which did not come together at the throat, but covering the shoulders and draped gracefully over each arm, reached to the hem of the robe. The cloak at times had, or seemed to have, the appearance of a brown, sometimes a purple, hue, or perhaps a slight blending of the two. The belt about his waist was of a gold color, as were his sandals.

His appearance, though quite youthful, gave at the same time the impression of rare maturity combined with great strength. He seemed a bit taller than medium height. The lines of his face appeared strong and purposeful, softened somewhat by a gentle serenity. I also saw his most pure heart at this time. Moreover, I saw the Holy Spirit in the form of a

**dove hovering over his head. Standing sideways, facing each other, were two angels, one on the right, the other on the left. Each carried what appeared to be a small pillow in a satin covering, the pillow on the right bearing a gold crown, the one on the left, a gold scepter. The angels were all white, even their faces and hair. It was a beautiful whiteness that reminded me of the stainlessness of heaven. Then I heard these words: “Thus should he be honored whom the King desires to honor.” (Diary, pgs. 29-30)**

One cannot help but see Joseph in a priestly role in this scene, for, with Mary, he was the first to offer the most unblemished Sacrifice back to the Father on behalf of all the world when he presented the Child in the temple and gave Him His name, Jesus, Savior. In days past, only the high priest could enter the Holy of Holies for that is where God truly dwelt in the midst of His people. Sitting on top of the Ark of the Covenant, God’s throne, in that inmost sacred sanctuary of the tabernacle was the propitiary or mercy seat with two cherubim facing each other. The high priest would enter this inmost sanctuary into the glorious Presence of God but once a year to sprinkle the blood of sacrifice on the mercy seat in order to atone for the sins of the people and gain for them the forgiveness and mercy of God. Here God would speak to His people through the priest. The dove is the sign of God’s presence as surely as the smoke of incense and the “unapproachable light” above the Ark was in days past. Joseph’s arms are raised in priestly gesture as he gazes toward heaven. The two angels are facing each other. We hear the voice from heaven speaking God’s decision to honor him with the crown and the scepter by which he rules over God’s family as patron and protector and intercedes for God’s mercy upon us all.

Reference: <http://www.domini.org/tabern/arkcovnt.htm>

Surely Joseph and Mary made a constant offering of that Perfect Holocaust to the Father on our behalf on the altar of their own hearts so that we, too, might one day receive the crown of victory and glory from the hands of God’s angels.

**When the vision ended, St. Joseph before taking leave spoke to me in the following manner: “The Holy Father need have no fear, for I have been appointed his special protector. As God chose me to be the special guardian of His Son, so has He chosen me as the special guardian of him who in Christ’s Name is head of the Mystical Body of that same Son on earth.”**

**My special protection of the Holy Father and the Church should be made known to him. God wishes to make this known to him that he may receive thereby renewed consolation and encouragement. During the war, little daughter, it was I who saved him from death at the hands of his enemies. Continually I watch over him and the Church, and I desire this to be acknowledged for the greater glory of God and the good of souls. (Diary, pgs. 29-31)**

St. Joseph is speaking of Eugenio Pacelli, Pope Pius XII. Eugenio Pacelli had been named secretary of the Congregation for Extraordinary Affairs in 1914 at the start of World War I. Having studied law and diplomacy, in 1917 the Vatican, working to end the

war, named him Apostolic Nuncio to the German state of Bavaria. While in Munich in 1919, Eugenio experienced a sudden invasion into the papal nunciature by the Communists, revolvers in hand. That experience left him with a lifelong fear of communism. Surely this is but one time which St. Joseph refers to as **saving him from death at the hands of his enemies**. In 1919 he was sent to the new German Weimar Republic and attempted to negotiate a concordat (papal agreement with a national government aimed at preserving the church's privileges and freedom of action within that country). While failing at that, he did, however, get agreements signed with Bavaria in 1924 and Prussia in 1929. In 1929 he became a cardinal and Secretary of State. He was quite the diplomat and traveled extensively on behalf of the Vatican. His time in Germany made him especially helpful to Pius XI in confronting racial issues as Hitler and the Nazis came to power in Germany in 1933. He became Pope in 1939 and did all he could to help save the lives of Jewish people and others sentenced to extermination during World War II. After the War he signed a Concordat with Hitler as the Vatican had done with other nations for years in the hope of protecting Church law and rights in that nation. Hence, he is the Pope whom St. Joseph refers to when he speaks of protecting him during the war. Pope Pius XII died in **October of 1958**, just months after St. Joseph spoke those words to Sister Mildred Mary Neuzil in **March of 1958**. He is the Pope who defined the dogma of the Assumption of Mary and gave us the beautiful encyclical letter on the Mystical Body of Christ. Much controversy has emerged with efforts toward his beatification, but surely St. Joseph will protect him through these attacks as well. Pope Pius XII left us with a very thought provoking statement it would do well for us to ponder deeply these days, especially in the light of America's role in the world and, through the message of "Our Lady of America®," America's role for the whole Church. How persistent Our Lady is about the dangers which menace the Church.

Reference on Pope Pius XII: <http://www.catholictradition.org/Papacy/piusxii-bio.htm>

**A day will come when the civilized world will deny its God, when the Church will doubt as Peter doubted. She will be tempted to believe that man has become God. In our churches, Christians will search in vain for the red lamp where God awaits them. Like Mary Magdalene, weeping before the empty tomb, they will ask, "Where have they taken Him?"**  
[Roche, *Pie XII Devant L'Histoire*, pp. 52-53.]

Is this our world? Are we embracing a neopagan philosophy that seeks to make man god? Do Christian nations prefer to be secular, ruled by faulty human wisdom rather than the immutable wisdom of God? Will the Church of Christ have to undergo a new age of persecution so that the blood of martyrs will again replenish our soil with the seeds of the Faith? Let us pray, pray daily as Our Lady asked, the Prayer to the Immaculate Conception that calls on all the angels and saints, especially St. Joseph, to assist Our Lady and us in renewing the face of the earth. With Mary, let us "go to Joseph" with all our needs!

### **Prayer to the Immaculate Conception**

**O Immaculate Mother, Queen of our Country, open our hearts, our homes, and our Land to the coming of Jesus, your Divine Son. With Him, reign over us, O heavenly Lady, so pure and so bright with the radiance**



of God's light shining in and about you. Be our Leader against the powers of evil set upon wresting the world of souls, redeemed at such a great cost by the sufferings of your Son and of yourself, in union with Him, from that same Savior, Who loves us with infinite charity.

We gather about you, O chaste and holy Mother, Virgin Immaculate, Patroness of our beloved Land, determined to fight under your banner of holy purity against the wickedness that would make all the world an abyss of evil, without God and without your loving maternal care.

We consecrate our hearts, our homes, our Land to your Most Pure Heart, O great Queen, that the kingdom of your Son, our Redeemer and our God, may be firmly established in us.

We ask no special sign of you, sweet Mother, for we believe in your great love for us, and we place in you our entire confidence. We promise to honor you by faith, love, and the purity of our lives according to your desire.

Reign over us, then, O Virgin Immaculate, with your Son Jesus Christ. May His Divine Heart and your most chaste Heart be ever enthroned and glorified among us. Use us, your children of America, as your instruments in bringing peace among men and nations. Work your miracles of grace in us, so that we may be a glory to the Blessed Trinity, Who created, redeemed, and sanctifies us.

May your valiant Spouse, St. Joseph, with the holy Angels and Saints, assist you and us in "renewing the face of the earth." Then when our work is over, come, Holy Immaculate Mother, and as our Victorious Queen, lead us to the eternal kingdom, where your Son reigns forever as King. Amen. (200 days)

(Written at the behest of Our Lady, October 5, 1956,  
2 years prior to the death of Pope Pius XII.)

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