

# St. Joseph's Place in God's Plan of Salvation

## The Hypostatic Union and Order of Grace

### The Year of St. Joseph



As in Heaven there are angelical hierarchies, and in these hierarchies, there are divers orders, so also on earth there is a hierarchy of grace, and in that hierarchy are included various orders, or ministries, which, according to the Angelic Doctor, St. Thomas, excel each other in proportion to their approximation to God. The highest of all these orders, whether angelic or human, is the Order of the Hypostatic Union, in which is Christ Jesus, God and Man. By the Hypostatic Union is meant that the Eternal Son of God, in His Incarnation, assumed human nature, and united it to Himself in personal unity; in other words, that in the one Divine Person of Jesus Christ, the two Natures, the Divine Nature and the Human Nature, ever distinct in themselves, became inseparably and eternally united.

(Edward Healy Thompson, M.A. THE LIFE AND GLORIES OF ST. JOSEPH, Tan Books, 1980, Pg. 5.)

Thompson speaks of orders that preceded the Incarnation, e.g., the Patriarchal which included the prototypes and the progenitors of Jesus, establishing his royal line of ancestry; the Levitical and sacerdotal order which prefigured the Church and the priesthood; and that of the Prophets, ending with John the Baptist, the immediate precursor of Jesus. There are also orders that succeeded Jesus, e.g., the Apostolic order and the orders or ministries of Holy Mother Church, but the Apostolic order is greatest of these because of its proximity to Jesus. But, above all these orders is the supreme order of the Hypostatic Union which has Jesus as its Head and upon which every order in heaven and on earth depends. As the nearer one is to the fire, the more one participates in the heat, so the nearer one is to Jesus, the more one participates in the magnitude of His grace.

Now, Joseph by divine predestination was placed in this sovereign order. Three only composed it—Jesus, Mary, Joseph. Jesus is true God and true Man; Mary is true Mother of God and mother of men; Joseph is true spouse of Mary and putative father of Jesus. Jesus is the principal subject of the Incarnation, and the author of the Redemption of the world; Mary is the immediate co-operatrix and, so to say, the executrix of the Incarnation itself; Joseph, the faithful depository of these two most precious pledges, was to provide that this sublime mystery of the Incarnation and Redemption should be brought about with the greatest possible congruity, so that the honour of the mother and of the God-Man, her Son, should remain intact. (Thompson, Pgs. 7-8.)



Thus, the lives of Jesus, Mary and Joseph form a triple heavenly alliance, an earthly trinity, that can never be broken. They are inseparably bound together in this order of grace and work of redemption: Jesus, the Redeemer; Mary, the Virgin-Mother of the Redeemer; and Joseph, the Virgin-Father of the Redeemer whose mission it was to conceal and protect the virginity of Mary, his own, and the divinity of Jesus until the appointed time to reveal these wondrous mysteries to the world. These three virgins ushered in God's New Covenant of mercy and love by their co-operation in a hierarchy of degree with God's eternal plan for which they were eternally predestined. God Himself determined that the restoration of the human family, modeled on the family of the Trinity,



marred by the sin of Adam and Eve, should be redeemed in the context of a new, Holy Family, who through their humility and obedience to the Divine Will, would restore and transcend the original grace of that first family on earth. The family as God created it, and now re-created it, must have a father and a mother at its beginning, making both Mary and Joseph essential as parents to the God-Man.



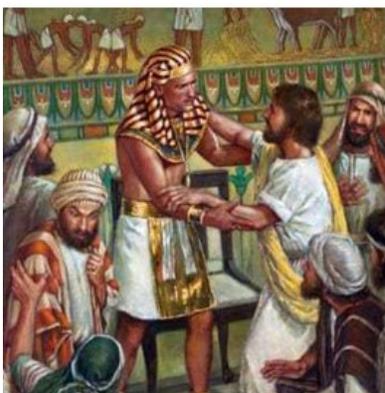
**The privilege of being chosen by God to be the Virgin-father of His Son was mine alone, and no honor, excluding that bestowed upon my Holy Spouse, was ever, or will ever, be as sublime or as high as this.**

**(Sister Mildred Mary Neuzil, The Diary, OUR LADY OF AMERICA, Tiffin, OH, Pg. 28. Words of St. Joseph to Sister, March 19, 1958.)**

**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.)**

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. Early Christians had great devotion to St. Joseph. **“Go to Joseph”** was the cry of those dying of famine outside Egypt. **“Go to Joseph”** was the cry of the early Church and many saints hungering for the bread of eternal life to feed their souls. Saint Teresa of Avila claimed that St. Joseph never failed her and always gave her more than she had asked for.



**As almighty God appointed Joseph, son of the patriarch Jacob, over all the land of Egypt to save grain for the people, so when the fullness of time had come and He was about to send to earth His only-begotten Son, the Savior of the world, He chose another Joseph, of whom the first had been the type, and He made him the lord and chief of His household and possessions, the guardian of His choicest treasures. Indeed, he had as his spouse the Immaculate Virgin Mary, of whom was born by the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ our Lord, who digned to be reputed in the sight of men as the son of Joseph, and was subject to him. Him whom countless kings and prophets had desired to see, Joseph not only saw but conversed with, and embraced in paternal affection, and kissed. He most diligently reared Him whom the faithful were to receive as the bread that came down from heaven whereby they might obtain eternal life. (Pope Pius IX, *Quemadmodum Deus*.)**

Because of his sublime dignity over the household of God's treasures, the Church has always sought Joseph's intercession when it is attacked from all sides, both

from within and from without and destruction looms over it. With Christ's promise in mind that the gates of hell shall not prevail, the Church calls upon Joseph, its Father as Mary is its Mother, to secure that pledge from their Divine Son to renew the face of the earth. Thus, on December 8, 1870, feast of the Immaculate Conception, Pope Pius IX who, in 1854, gave us that great dogma by which our Nation honors Our Lady as Patroness of our land, issued the decree *Quemadmodum Deus* declaring St. Joseph "Patron and Protector of the Church" to stand against the evils of his own day. He also ordered that the feast of St. Joseph on March 19<sup>th</sup> be celebrated as a double of the first class, without any octave, as it occurs during Lent.

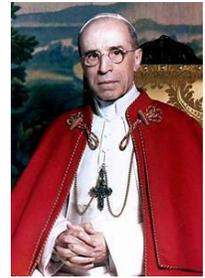
On the feast of the Assumption, August 15, 1889, Pope Leo XIII wrote his encyclical letter *Quamquam Pluries* on devotion to St. Joseph stating:

...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, St. Joseph himself declared to Sister Mildred Mary Neuzil that he is the protector of Christ's Vicar on Earth, the Holy Father, as well. On March 19, 1958 he favored Sister with a unique and marvelous vision of himself and asked that a day be set aside to honor his fatherhood, saying: "Thus should he be honored whom the King desires to honor." 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 was speaking of Eugenio Pacelli who had been secretary of the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs during World War I. At the end of the war, he was named Apostolic Nuncio to the German state of Bavaria. While in Munich in 1919, Eugenio experienced a sudden invasion of the Communists, revolvers in hand, attempting to steal his car or perhaps, kill him. They suddenly turned and left him unharmed. That experience left him with a lifelong fear of communism. 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 1933. He became Pope Pius XII in 1939 and did all he could to help save the lives of Jewish people and others set for extermination. 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 those nations. 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 these words to Sister Mildred Mary Neuzil in March of 1958. While he had been secretary of State during Pius XI's reign, he spoke about the message of Our Lady to Lucia at Fatima and his worry for the future Church. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pope\\_Pius\\_XII](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pope_Pius_XII))



**Let us suppose that communism is one of the most evident instruments of subversion used against the Church and the Traditions of Divine Revelation. ... 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?" It will be then that there will arise priests from Africa, from Asia, from the Americas – who have been formed in the missionary seminaries – who will speak out and proclaim that the "Bread of Life" is not ordinary bread and the Mother of the God-Man is not a mother just like many others. And they will be torn to pieces for having testified that Christianity is not a religion just like others, because its Head is the Son of God and the [Catholic] Church is His Church. [Roche, Pie XII Devant L'Histoire, Pp. 52-53.]**



On December 8, 2020, in honor of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of St. Joseph being declared Protector of the Church, Pope Francis issued his apostolic letter *Patris Corde, (With a Father's Heart)*, proclaiming **A Year of St. Joseph**. It began on the feast of the Immaculate Conception in 2020 and extends to the feast in 2021. He states: **As the guardian of Jesus and Mary, Joseph cannot "be other than the guardian of the Church," of her motherhood, and of the Body of Christ. Consequently, every poor, needy, suffering or dying person, every stranger, every prisoner, every infirm person is 'the child' whom Joseph continues to protect. From St Joseph, writes Pope Francis, we must learn to love the Church and the poor.**

**St. Joseph, Terror of Demons, protect us in these dark times!  
Our Lady of America Devotion, Tiffin, Ohio, Christmas, 2020.  
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