

## Saint Joseph: Patron of Husbands Who Do More Than the Minimum

### The Silent but Strong Saint

Today, we celebrate **Saint Joseph, the Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary**—a man so holy that God entrusted him with the two greatest treasures of the universe: **Jesus and Mary**. Talk about pressure! Some men today think it's tough just remembering their anniversary. Joseph had to **raise the Son of God!**

And what do we hear from him in Scripture? **Absolutely nothing**. Not one word. Some people might joke that this makes him the perfect model for husbands, but Joseph's silence wasn't about passivity—it was about **active trust, work, and obedience**.

### A History of Devotion to St. Joseph

Devotion to Saint Joseph has grown steadily over the centuries. He was, for a long time, **the hidden saint**, much like he was in the life of Christ. The early Church Fathers, like **Saint Augustine**, saw him as the "faithful guardian" of Jesus, an icon of divine providence. **Saint John Chrysostom** praised his **fatherly care**, saying that while he was not Jesus' biological father, he fulfilled every duty of an earthly father **with love and diligence**.

But it was in the Middle Ages that Joseph's popularity skyrocketed. **Saint Teresa of Ávila**, known for getting things done, famously said that **she never prayed to Saint Joseph in vain**. If she had a problem, she'd turn to him. If there was no money? Saint Joseph. If something needed fixing? Saint Joseph. If her monastery was falling apart? **Well, you guessed it—Saint Joseph!**

Pope Pius IX, in 1870, declared him **Patron of the Universal Church**, and later, Pope Leo XIII wrote that "Joseph was the guardian, the administrator, and the legal defender of the divine house." Today, he remains the go-to saint for fathers, workers, the Church, and, frankly, anyone in need of divine assistance—especially men who need to **step up their game at home**.

### Saint Joseph vs. The "Minimum Effort" Husband

Now, let's be honest. Many modern men approach marriage and family life **like it's a gym membership they use just enough to say they have one**. "I took out the trash last week—what more do you want?" Or: "I sat through that two-hour ballet recital. Surely, I get a husband-of-the-year award?"

Saint Joseph **sets the bar higher**. Look at the Gospel today (Luke 2:41-51A). He and Mary spend three days **frantically searching** for Jesus when He stays behind in the temple. How many modern men would last **three minutes** before checking

the score of the game? But Joseph isn't a "bare minimum" kind of guy. He **seeks, sacrifices, and serves**—because **that's what real love does**.

Saint Paul, in today's reading from **Romans 4:13, 16-18, 22**, reminds us that faith isn't just a belief system—it's **a way of life that demands action**. Joseph's life was **faith in action**. No angel had to come and remind him twice—when God told him to go to Egypt, he **went**. When God said to return, he **returned**. Imagine how different things would be if Joseph had said, "Eh, maybe tomorrow."

### **Fathers of the Church: What They Say About St. Joseph**

The Church Fathers saw in Joseph the ultimate model of a **real man**:

- **Saint Basil** calls him the "minister of salvation," acting as a living instrument of God's providence.
- **Saint Jerome** says that **his purity protected Mary's own**, showing that strength isn't about dominance but **self-giving love**.
- **Origen** called him a "**righteous man**" who lived a **hidden but heroic faith**.

### **Saint Joseph in the Modern World**

In a time when masculinity is either **distorted into toxic bravado** or **downplayed into irrelevance**, Saint Joseph teaches us that **real men protect, provide, and pray**.

- **Men today** think buying flowers once a year is enough. Joseph moved his entire family to Egypt for their safety.
- **Men today** complain about waking up early for work. Joseph woke up in the middle of the night because an angel told him to flee with Jesus and Mary.
- **Men today** might think being a "good husband" is occasionally loading the dishwasher. Joseph taught Jesus how to **work with his hands, how to pray, and how to be a man of God**.

Joseph doesn't do the minimum. **He does whatever is necessary**.

**Be Like Saint Joseph: So, dear brothers in Christ, the next time you think, "I've done enough for my family," ask yourself: Would Saint Joseph say that? Probably not.**

Instead, let's follow his example: **lead with humility, love with action, protect with courage, and obey God without hesitation**. Because **holy families don't just happen**—they are built by men like Saint Joseph, who don't settle for the minimum.

**Saint Joseph, Terror of Demons, Guardian of the Church, and Patron of Husbands—pray for us!**