

SUNDAY DAYS OF PRAYER

MAY 1, 2022

MARIAN HOUR

1. Rosary – 2. Consecration to Marie-Paule – 3. Conference

Saint Joseph, Artisan of the Kingdom

Dear brothers and sisters, on this first day of May, it is good to consider the figure of Saint Joseph, a man who listened, who was entirely devoted and obedient to God. The head of the Holy Family, this saintly Patriarch, through his life of work and prayer, is a reference for us through his service and the very intimate bond he had with Mary and Jesus.

Many Popes have honored Saint Joseph, proposing him to us as a model of interior life. Saint John Paul II indicated that *“the Church trusts in his noble example, which transcends all individual states of life and serves as a model for the entire Christian community, whatever the condition or duties of each of its members may be.”* (John Paul II, *Guardian of the Redeemer*, August 15, 1989, no. 30) For his part, Pope Pius XI wrote: *“In a life of faithful performance of everyday duties, he left an example for all those who must gain their bread by the toil of their hands.”* (Pius XI, *Divini Redemptoris*, March 19, 1937, no. 81) There you have points which are akin to our spirituality on the love of the duties of our state accomplished well for the glory of God in whatever vocation we have.

Marie-Paule shared her experience with us through these words: *“My work is a prayer because centered on God and for God, who sustains me.”* (*Life of Love*, Appendix V, p. 99) *“I like manual work; it’s a better chance for me to talk with the Lord.”* (*Life of Love* XIV, p. 156) To a Father who said to her, *“How can you descend to these humble kitchen tasks after all the praise and favorable publicity you enjoyed when you were in radio and journalism?”* Marie-Paule replied: *“Father, when we are where God wants us to be, we are always happy and sure of going ahead.”* (*Id.* II, p. 167)

That is the way it was for Saint Joseph who worked in the background for the heavenly Father’s work. Although he died before the beginning of Jesus’ public life, the fact nevertheless remains that his role was still a primary one, as Jesus bore witness in Maria Valtorta: *“Joseph would not have been on Golgotha? It would seem to you that he would not be among the co-redeemers? In fact, I tell you that he was the first one, and for that reason, he is great in God’s eyes; great through the sacrifice, the patience, the steadfastness, the faith. Was there a faith greater than the faith of the one who believed without having seen the miracles of the Messiah?”* (Maria Valtorta, *Catechesis* of March 21, 1944)

God the Father did not permit that the Holy Family should shine in the eyes of the world, be privileged, exempt from the preoccupations of life and not have to work in order to meet its needs. Saint Joseph allows us to glimpse the richness and

greatness of a life of labour which tended towards the realities of heaven. Marie-Paule, in focussing us again on what is essential, noted: *“When souls work uniquely for the common good, to the glory of God and Mary, they live only in the spirit.”* (*Life of Love* IX, p. 174)

Still in Maria Valtorta’s writings: *“According to Jesus, when something difficult was weighing upon the Holy Family, [Saint Joseph] was in the habit of saying: ‘Let us uplift our spirit. We will meet God’s gaze and we will forget that men are the ones who makes us suffer, and let us do all that is difficult as though it were being set before us by the Most High. In that way, we will sanctify even the smallest things, and God will love us.’”* (*Id.* Maria Valtorta, January 23, 1947) From Saint Joseph, there issues forth that peace dwelling in his inner being, enabling him to persevere faithfully and go forward serenely in keeping with the directives from the Most High.

Saint John Paul II taught us that *“at the workbench where he plied his trade together with Jesus, Joseph brought human work closer to the mystery of the Redemption.”* (*Guardian of the Redeemer*, no. 22) In fact, understood well, work is not only an activity of survival, of accomplishment, of passion, it is also a means of sanctifying oneself and accumulating merits for Heaven and to save souls.

Today, through our life of work and prayer, not only do we bring our contribution to the Redemption but we are also working for the mystery of the Co-Redemption. Saint Joseph is the model for us of a life dedicated to Jesus and Mary, since he lived, concretely, pages of the Gospel with them. Let us place ourselves in his school and imitate him in order to serve Jesus and Marie-Paule.

This led Saint Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort to say, with regard to Saint Joseph: *“The eternal Father chose you to feed His Son here below, to be his guardian. If three words from Mary were able to sanctify Saint John through their virtue... what then will have produced in you her very holy and very sweet conversations? Her words delighted you, her presence filled you with grace and light.”* And in one of his hymns, he placed on Saint Joseph’s lips the following words which are like a program of life to guide us: *“Seek what the world flees and flee everything it pursues. Guide yourself only by faith in order to be happy with me by imitating my life.”* (Booklet *“Joseph modèle de vie”*, MDN, p. 80)

Dear Knights of Mary, Saint Joseph wants to make of us artisans of the Kingdom by being, in his wake, men, women and children with a profound interior life so as to be prepared

to overcome all the obstacles inherent in our life here below.

Let us conclude with this passage from a prayer by Saint Pius XII, as we ask Saint Joseph to intercede for us with the entire Divinity so that *“we may see in [our daily work] an effective means of glorifying God, of sanctifying ourselves, and of being a useful member in the society in which we live. These*

should be the highest ideals for all our actions... in order that we may lead on earth a peaceful and a holy life, a prelude to the life of eternal happiness that awaits us in Heaven.” (Pope Pius XII, Prayer to Saint Joseph the Workman, 1958)

Have a good month of May in union with Mary and Saint Joseph!
Father Stéphane Bouchet

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EUCCHARISTIC HOUR

1. Rosary – 2. Vespers – 3. Conference – 4. Invocations – 5. Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament

Saint Joseph, the Model of Interior Life

It is fitting to mention first of all that this conference draws its inspiration from a long article written by our Mother and published in the paper *Marie* in March 1978, an article entitled: “Saint Joseph, the Model of Interior Life”. In this article, she also presented many aspects of the spiritual life. It was signed simply “Marie”, bringing out the fact that it was truly the Immaculate who was its author. This article was divided into six sections: the interior life, a model of interior life, chastity, the union with God, the latter times, a holy hope.

Each one of those sections was so rich that it could have been the subject of a conference all on its own. However, if we want to bring out the main ideas, it becomes obvious that Joseph was a righteous man because he was a man of faith. He had inherited a tremendous spiritual baggage from his ancestors who were of the royal race of David and who feared God. Thus, his mission was prepared and sanctified by them long in advance.

Here is a quotation from our dear Mother which leads us directly to the title of the presentation which is “Saint Joseph, the Model of Interior Life”, and it is particularly important to enable us to understand the main idea.

“God grants His intimacy to those who give themselves to Him in the simplicity of faith and love, to those with a pure heart. ‘Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God,’ Jesus said.”

Then, she goes on to emphasize this first sentence, so that we may understand how important this idea is for her. *“This vision of God is reserved here below to those who keep their integrity, the purity of their heart for Him. The pure heart, like the clear and limpid eye, is able to understand God and enter into the depths of his infinite mystery.”*

Further on in her article, Marie-Paule spoke to us, first of all, of the vow of chastity as it was lived at the time of Mary and Joseph for the purpose of hastening the coming of the promised Messiah, and then, further on, she would bring us back to the present time of the 20th century which still applies very well today. Here is another passage in this regard:

“At a time when sensuality is gripping the masses wallowing in debauchery, there rise up lilies of purity, young people who are practising continence, and ‘Cenacle-Homes’ are multiplying, which is so marvelous. Parents, faithful to God’s laws, faithful to the ‘sacramental yes’ which joined them together for ever, parents who have understood that authentic love is, first and foremost, the union of hearts and souls, are now consecrating themselves to God by means of the promise and then, afterwards, in a mutual consent, through the vow of chastity, in accordance with their conjugal state and in a progressive and

even complete continence, doing so after having given to God the souls He was expecting from their union.”

Mention is also made of the very bad latter times in which we still find ourselves, the terrible battle in which the Apocalypse is being realized and in which subversion, universal disorder and all kinds of laxity are rampant because we no longer believe in God. Here is a quotation about this:

“Total abjection puts man endowed with reason below the animal. He forgets the beauty of the pure soul, created in the image of God, in order to cover himself with the carapace of the BEAST. It is the triumph of Babylon, of the prostitute; it is the carnal man from whom the supernatural dimension has been amputated.”

In the last part, which is somewhat like a conclusion, we can read:

“Authentic love in marriage does not consist in allowing oneself to enjoy all carnal pleasures without any respect for God’s laws under the pretext of a human growth. Genuine and human growth or development is enhanced or given value first of all through self-denial. It requires an in-depth transformation in the very pure love of God, of others and of ourselves.”

Let us pause briefly to consider this last sentence. She tells us that authentic human love requires an in-depth transformation in the very pure love of God, of others and of ourselves. In other words, authentic human love implies that we ought to transform our manner of loving others and loving ourselves by placing the emphasis not only on the love of God but on the very pure love of God. And how can we achieve this? With the very pure love of God not only as a model and an inspiration, because what she tells us goes even further than that. It is an in-depth transformation IN the very pure love of God. Let us clearly understand how far that leads us. *“In the love of God”* means that we enter into Him in a way, in order to love with His own love, with the Love the Father, the Son, the Mother and the Daughter share among themselves and which is none other than the Holy Spirit. This is an appeal to be transfigured by allowing the divine love to pass more and more, so that it is no longer we who are living but God living in us.

There is one unique way of accomplishing something so great and so beautiful: purity. It is with good reason that her article and so many of her other writings speak of this virtue so often.... And we should also note that if the virtue of simplicity was the one she preferred the most, this virtue is possible only when a soul is pure enough to allow God to pass, He who alone is simple, perfectly simple, infinitely simple for ever.

Dear friends, accompanied by our dear Mother, we were elevated to the loftiest spheres of spirituality, but in order not to

rapidly fall back into the weightiness of our everyday life, let us never forget the greatness of what we are and of what we are living. That too, our Mother explained it to us, as we saw with regard to the terrible times in which we are living, and I take up again what she wrote: *"[The man endowed with reason] forgets the beauty of the pure soul created in the image of God in order to cover himself with the carapace of the BEAST."*

Yes, he forgets, he forgets... Let us pray, dear friends, meditate, often raise our hearts to God in order to remind ourselves of our nature, of the infinite beauty of our being children of God. Only pure hearts achieve this, but this is a happiness we must work at regaining every day because it is the contact with

Heaven. Yes, we must remember this. Jesus says it at every Mass: *"Do this in memory of me"*; in other words, "in memory of me who am the beloved child of God, so that you too may remember what you are as a result of the creation of my Father and your beloved Father".

In this time of the new millennium, the *"do this in memory of me"* is applicable to our dear Mother Immaculate as well, for the Eucharist is also nourishing ourselves of her, of what she is, that is, the Immaculate. Let us remember what we are as a result of our primary creation, that is, children of God and of the Immaculate.

Father Stéphane Boisvert