

Pope Proclaims 2021, Year of St. Joseph

On December 8, 2020 Pope Francis in his Apostolic Letter, entitled *Patris Corde* (With a Father's Heart), proclaimed the year 2021 as a Year of St. Joseph for the Universal Church. The occasion for the declaration comes on the 150th anniversary of the Proclamation of St. Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church, by Blessed Pius IX.

The Pope also cites the pandemic as a reason for the special year to St. Joseph, explaining that “our lives are woven together and sustained by ordinary people, people often overlooked...Doctors, nurses, storekeepers and supermarket workers, cleaning personal, caregivers, transport workers, men and women working to provide essential services and public safety...They understand that no one is saved alone.” In St. Joseph the Pope hopes “each of us can discover – the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence – an intercessor, a support and a guide in times of trouble.”

We encourage you to read this Apostolic Letter in its entirety. In it the Pope shares many reflections on St. Joseph with a special emphasis on St. Joseph as a father, tender and loving, obedient to the will of God, accepting and courageous, a father who worked hard for the benefit of his family. The Pope is clear that the intent of this Apostolic Letter is to help foster a greater love for St. Joseph and to encourage all of us, no matter what our state in life, to emulate St. Joseph in his virtues and to pray for his intercession. At the end of the Apostolic Letter the Pope gives us the following prayer to St. 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.

May we all make this year of St. Joseph special in our own lives and those whom we love.