

Listening to a shared reflection



“By the very act of his obedience to the will of God in which St. Joseph accepted to publicly give a name to the child Jesus, he accepted full responsibility for the child and his mother. St. Joseph is an admirable model for all those entrusted with the responsibility of raising and caring for the children that are biologically not their own. He gave him a name, raised him, protected him, provided for him, taught him a trade, loved him, ... a guardian par excellence! He is an outstanding role model of child protection.” *(Time of silence)*

- **Magnificat:** Jesus returned with Mary and Joseph to Nazareth; there he lived and was obedient to them.

- **Intercession:** Shared Prayer

Response: Saint Joseph, guardian of Lord, intercede for us.

- **Our Father**

Prayer to Saint Joseph for the vocations



Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,
Husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
To you God entrusted his Son;
In you Mary put her confidence.
With you Christ became man.
Oh, Blessed Joseph, to us too,
show yourself a father
and guide us in the path of life.
Obtain for us generous vocations
of Brothers and of Lay Mennaisians
so that the children and youth may continue to
know and love better Jesus Christ.

AMEN!



PRESENCE AND HOPE

St. Joseph, Guardian of Jesus

Vespers - 1 December 2021

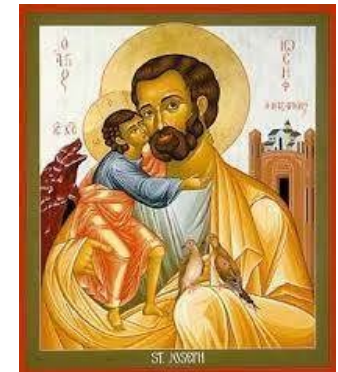
For the vocations of Brothers and of Lay Mennaisians
in the Delegation of Italy

After the 11 readings taken from *Patris Corde* of Pope Francis, we close the year with the reading from *Redemptoris Custos* of St. John Paul II. Thanks to everyone for having journeyed together for 12 months with St. Joseph.

St. Joseph, great protector: Text by Owen Alstott

Melody: meter 76.76. D

1. St. Joseph, great protector
of Jesus Christ our Lord,
O holy man of justice,
We sing with one accord,
Extolling you with praises
for virtue strong and bold,
For faith which still amazes
Each time the story's told.
2. St. Joseph, you were gifted
To be Our Lady's spouse;
In manly joy you lifted
The Christ-child in your house!
When you were given warning
of troubled days ahead,
You yielded not to mourning,
But trusted God instead.
3. St. Joseph through your labor
In simple, honest care,
Your love for God and neighbor
Is great beyond compare!
O holy Spouse of Mary,
Protector of our Lord,
Help us our cross to carry,
And share your great reward!



Psalm 121

Ant.: The Lord watches over his people, and protects them as the apple of his eye.

Psalm: 121

I lift up my eyes to the mountains
from where shall come my help?
My help shall come from the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.

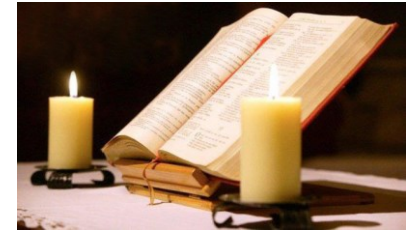
May he never allow you to stumble
Let him sleep not, your guard.
No, he sleeps not nor slumbers,
Israel's guard.

The Lord is your guard and your shade;
at the right side he stands
By day the sun shall not smite you
nor the moon in the night

The Lord will guard you from evil,
he will guard your soul.
The Lord will guard your going and coming
both now and for ever.

Word of God: Mt 1: 20-21

The angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins". **(Time of silence)**



Apostolic Exhortation: *Redemptoris Custos* St. John Paul II (Pope) no. 5

5. Therefore he, (St. Joseph), became a unique guardian of the mystery "hidden for ages in God" (Eph 3:9), as did Mary, in that decisive moment which St. Paul calls "the fullness of time," when "God sent forth his Son, born of woman...to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons" (Gal 4:4-5). In the words of the Council: "It pleased God, in his goodness and wisdom, to reveal himself and to make known the mystery of his will (cf. Eph 1:9). His will was that men should have access to the Father, through Christ, the Word made flesh, in the Holy Spirit, and become sharers in the divine nature (cf. Eph 2:18; 2 Pt 1 4)." (cf. *Vat. Council II, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, Dei Verbum, 2*).

Together with Mary, Joseph is the first guardian of this divine mystery. Together with Mary, and in relation to Mary, he shares in this final phase of God's self-revelation in Christ and he does so from the very beginning. Looking at the gospel texts of both Matthew and Luke, one can also say that Joseph is the first to share in the faith of the Mother of God and that in doing so he supports his spouse in the faith of the divine annunciation. He is also the first to be placed by God on the path of Mary's "pilgrimage of faith." It is a path along which - especially at the time of Calvary and Pentecost - Mary will precede in a perfect way. (cf. *Vat. Council II, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Lumen Gentium, 63*).

(Time of silence)