

Listening to our predecessors

Rev. Bro. Étienne Barbier,
Superior General,
Circular n° 206,
Devotion to St. Joseph.



"Let us enter the workshop in Nazareth and observe the master and the pupil. (...) Joseph's dignity and wisdom are shown above all in the way he treats and teaches Jesus; he holds authority and exercises it, but with infinite respect and gentleness. A beautiful lesson for us. "

(Time of silence)

- **Magnificat:** The beloved Son of the Most High was called the son of Joseph.
- **Intercession** : Shared Prayer
Response: Saint Joseph, Father in the shadows, 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 Joseph, a Father in the shadows

Vespers - 7 July 2021

For the vocations of the Brothers and the Lay
Mennaisian in Saint Paul District (West Africa)

Hymn to Saint Joseph:

LOOK TO US ST JOSEPH
(or any other convenient hymn)

Melody: *Dutch Melody 76.76D*

Music: *Holland 1539*; Text: *Michael Gannon*

Cf. Christian Prayer for the feast of St. Joseph on 19th March.

1- Look to us Saint Joseph
Protector of our Lord,
Who followed you through deserts,
And gave you blessed reward;
Our foes are yet about us,
Be strength now at ours side,
Be light against the darkness,
St. Joseph be our guide.

2- We venerate your justice,
The gospels praise your name,
You are the saint all humble,
Who gained eternal fame,
In your devoted family
Our souls in trust confide,
Direct our way to heaven.
St. Joseph be our guide.



Psalm 62

Ant.: He alone is my rock, my stronghold, my fortress: I stand firm.

In God alone is my soul at rest;
my help comes from him.
He alone is my rock, my stronghold,
my fortress: I stand firm.

How long will you all attack one man
to break him down,
as though he were a tottering wall,
or a tumbling fence?

Their plan is only to destroy:
they take pleasure in lies.
With their mouth they utter blessing
but in their heart, they curse.

In God alone be at rest, my soul;
for my hope comes from him.
He alone is my rock, my stronghold,
my fortress: I stand firm.

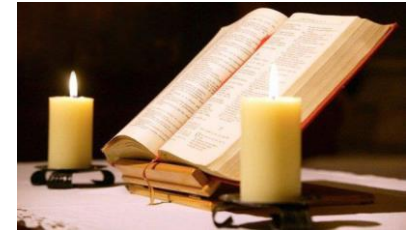
In God is my safety and glory,
the rock of my strength.
Take refuge in God, all you people.
Trust him at all times.
Pour out your hearts before him
for God is our refuge.

For God has said only one thing:
only two do I know:
that to God alone belongs power
and to you, Lord, love:
and that you repay each man
according to his deeds.

Word of God: Mt 2 : 14-15

So, Joseph got up and, taking the child and his mother with him, left that night for Egypt, where he stayed until Herod was dead. This was to fulfil what the Lord had spoken through the prophet: I called my son out of Egypt.

(Time of Silence)



Pape Francis : Patris Corde, n° 7



The Polish writer Jan Dobraczyński, in his book *The Shadow of the Father*, tells the story of Saint Joseph's life in the form of a novel. He uses the evocative image of a shadow to define Joseph. In his relationship to Jesus, Joseph was the earthly shadow of the heavenly Father: he watched over him and protected him, never leaving him to go his own way. We can think of Moses' words to Israel: "In the wilderness... you saw how the Lord your God carried you, just as one carries a child, all the way that you travelled" (*Deut 1:31*). In a similar way, Joseph acted as a father for his whole life. Fathers are not born, but made. A man does not become a father simply by bringing a child into the world, but by taking up the responsibility to care for that child. Whenever a man accepts responsibility for the life of another, in some way he becomes a father to that person. (...)

Joseph found happiness not in mere self-sacrifice but in self-gift. In him, we never see frustration but only trust. His patient silence was the prelude to concrete expressions of trust. Our world today needs fathers. It has no use for tyrants who would domineer others as a means of compensating for their own needs. It rejects those who confuse authority with authoritarianism, service with servility, discussion with oppression, charity with a welfare mentality, power with destruction. Every true vocation is born of the gift of oneself, which is the fruit of mature sacrifice. The priesthood and consecrated life likewise require this kind of maturity. Whatever our vocation, whether to marriage, celibacy or virginity, our gift of self will not come to fulfilment if it stops at sacrifice; were that the case, instead of becoming a sign of the beauty and joy of love, the gift of self would risk being an expression of unhappiness, sadness and frustration.

(Time of silence)