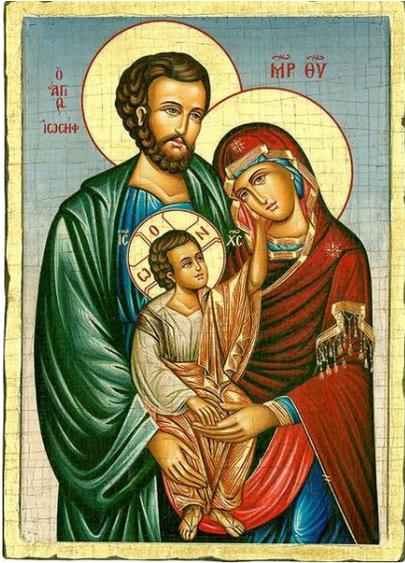


The Virtues of Saint Joseph



This year dedicated to St. Joseph allows us to consider his virtues as a model husband to the Blessed Virgin Mary as written of, by Father Donald H. Calloway in his book *Consecration to St. Joseph* (Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception, 2020). Sacred Scripture calls St. Joseph the “husband of Mary” ([Mt. 1:16,19](#)). If God chose St. Joseph to marry Our Lady then he must have been the best of husbands.

St. Joseph “took Mary his wife into his home” ([Mt. 1:24](#)). In obedience to the angel, St. Joseph received Mary with great humility as his wife. He provided a home for her and the Incarnate Son of

God. He sacrificed willingly and joyfully for his wife and foster Child. He loved Mary and would do anything for her. He accompanied Mary to the census in Bethlehem, made provisions for the birth of the Christ, accompanied his wife to the circumcision, the presentation in the temple and was at her side constantly until they found the 12-year-old Son of God in the temple. Wives flourish when their husbands support them. St. Joseph is an excellent model of constancy in love for his wife.

St. Joseph is also a model of purity and complete command of his appetites. Tradition tells us that he was a virgin before marriage and, certainly, during his marriage with the ever-virgin Mary. St. Joseph is a model for husbands in safeguarding the virtue of their wives. Even though married Christians do not take vows of virginity they nonetheless are responsible to guard their spouse’s dignity in dress, language, courtesy and sexual relations. St. Joseph teaches husbands how to be pure, chaste, modest and sacrificial toward their wives.

We owe God (and our wives) pure love. Ask St. Joseph to help you as a husband to love your wives like he did and to love Jesus and Mary with similar constancy and devotion.

<https://mycatholic.life/year-of-saint-joseph/bulletin-articles-for-year-of-saint-joseph/>

Fourth Week of Easter 2021

Good Shepherd Sunday

Jesus said: “I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. A hired man, who is not a shepherd and whose sheep are not his own, sees a wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away, and the wolf catches and scatters them. This is because he works for pay and has no concern for the sheep.” [John 10:11](#)

Traditionally, this Fourth Sunday of Easter is called “Good Shepherd Sunday.” This is because the readings for this Sunday from all three liturgical years come from the tenth chapter of John’s Gospel in which Jesus teaches clearly and repeatedly about His role of being the Good Shepherd. What does it mean to be a shepherd? More specifically, how is it that Jesus most perfectly acts as the Good Shepherd of us all? The image of Jesus being a shepherd is an endearing image. Many artists have shown Jesus as a gentle and kind man holding a sheep in His arms or on His shoulders. In part, it is this holy image that we put before our mind’s eye to ponder today. This is an inviting image and one that helps us to turn to our Lord, as a child would turn to a parent in need. But though this gentle and endearing image of Jesus as a shepherd is quite inviting, there are other aspects of His role as Shepherd that should also be considered.

The Gospel quoted above gives us the heart of Jesus’ definition of the most important quality of a good shepherd. He is one who “lays down his life for the sheep.” He is one who is willing to suffer, out of love, for those entrusted to his care. He is one who chooses the life of the sheep over his own life. At the heart of this teaching is sacrifice. A shepherd is sacrificial. And being sacrificial is the truest and most accurate definition of love.

Though Jesus is the “Good Shepherd” Who gave His life for us all, we must also daily strive to imitate His sacrificial love for others. We must be Christ, the Good Shepherd, to others every day. And the way we do this is by looking for ways to lay our lives down for others, putting them first, overcoming every selfish tendency, and serving them with our lives. Love is not only experiencing endearing and heartwarming moments with others; first and foremost, love is about being sacrificial.

Reflect, today, upon these two images of Jesus the Good Shepherd. First, ponder the tender and gentle Lord Who welcomes you and cares for you in a holy, compassionate, and endearing way. But then turn your eyes to the Crucifixion. Our Good Shepherd did, indeed, give His life for us all. His shepherding love led Him to suffer greatly and to lay His life down so that we could be saved. Jesus was not afraid to die for us, because His love was perfect. We are the ones who matter to Him, and He was willing to do anything necessary to love us, including sacrificing His life out of love. Ponder this most holy and pure sacrificial love and strive to more fully offer this same love to all those whom you are called to love.

Jesus our Good Shepherd, I thank You profoundly for loving me to the point of sacrificing Your life on the Cross. You love me not only with the utmost tenderness and compassion but also in a sacrificial and selfless way. As I receive Your divine love, dear Lord, help me to also imitate Your love and to sacrifice my life for others. Jesus, my Good Shepherd, I trust in You.