



## DECREE

### **The gift of special indulgences is granted on the occasion of the Year of Saint Joseph, summoned by Pope Francis to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the proclamation of Saint Joseph as Patron of the universal Church**

The gift of special indulgences is granted on the occasion of the Year of Saint Joseph, summoned by Pope Francis to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the proclamation of Saint Joseph as patron of the universal Church.

Today marks the 150th anniversary of the Decree *Quemadmodum Deus*, by which Blessed Pius IX, moved by the grave and mournful circumstances in which a Church was harassed by the hostility of men, declared Saint Joseph the Patron of the Catholic Church .

To perpetuate the dedication of the entire Church to the powerful patronage of the Custodian of Jesus, Pope Francis has established that, from today, the anniversary of the proclamation decree as well as the day consecrated to the Immaculate Virgin and wife of the chaste Joseph, until the 8 December 2021, a special Year of Saint Joseph is celebrated, in which each faithful, following his example, can daily strengthen his life of faith in the full fulfillment of God's will.

All the faithful will thus have the opportunity to commit themselves, with prayers and good works, to obtain, with the help of Saint Joseph, head of the heavenly Family of Nazareth, consolation and relief from the serious human and social tribulations that afflict the contemporary world.

The devotion to the Custodian of the Redeemer has developed widely throughout the history of the Church, which not only attributes to him one of the highest cult after that of the Mother of God his wife, but has also granted him many patronages.

The Magisterium of the Church continues to discover old and new greatness in this treasure that is Saint Joseph, like the father of the Gospel of Matthew "who extracts new and old things from his treasure" (Mt 13:52).

Of great benefit for the perfect achievement of the end pursued will be the gift of Indulgences that the Apostolic Penitentiary, through this decree issued in accordance with the will of Pope Francis, graciously grants during the Year of Saint Joseph.

The plenary indulgence is granted under the usual conditions (sacramental confession, Eucharistic communion and prayer according to the intentions of the Holy Father) to the faithful who, with a spirit detached from any sin, participate in the Year of Saint Joseph on the occasions and in the manner indicated by this Apostolic Penitentiary.

- to. Saint Joseph, an authentic man of faith, invites us to rediscover our filial relationship with the Father, to renew our fidelity to prayer, to listen and respond with profound discernment to the will of God. The plenary Indulgence is granted to those who meditate for at least 30 minutes on the Lord's Prayer, or who participate in a spiritual retreat of at least one day that includes a meditation on Saint Joseph;

- b. The Gospel attributes to Saint Joseph the title of "just man" (cf. Mt 1,19): he, guardian of the "intimate secret that is found in the depths of the heart and soul" [1], depositary of the mystery of God and, therefore, the ideal patron of the inner forum, he prompts us to rediscover the value of silence, prudence and loyalty in the fulfillment of our duties. The virtue of justice practiced in an exemplary way by Joseph is full adherence to divine law, which is the law of mercy, "because it is precisely the mercy of God that brings true justice to fruition" [2]. Therefore, those who, following the example of Saint Joseph, perform a corporal or spiritual work of mercy, will also be able to achieve the gift of plenary Indulgence;

- c. The main aspect of Joseph's vocation was to be custodian of the Holy Family of Nazareth, husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary and legal father of Jesus. So that all Christian families are encouraged to recreate the same atmosphere of intimate communion, love and prayer that was lived in the Holy Family, the Plenary Indulgence is granted for the recitation of the Holy Rosary in families and between the bride and groom.

- d. On May 1, 1955, the Servant of God Pius XII instituted the feast of Saint Joseph the worker, "with the intention *that everyone recognize the dignity of work and that it inspire social life and the laws founded on the equitable distribution of rights. and duties.*" [3] Therefore, all those who entrust their work daily to the protection of Saint Joseph and to all believers who invoke with their prayers the intercession of the worker of Nazareth, so that they may obtain plenary indulgence. who are looking for work find it and everyone's work is more dignified.

- e. The flight of the Holy Family to Egypt "shows us God is there where man is in danger, where man suffers, where he flees, where he experiences rejection and abandonment." [4] Plenary indulgence is granted to the faithful who pray the litany of Saint Joseph (for the Latin tradition), or the Akathistos to Saint Joseph, in its entirety or at least part of it (for the Byzantine tradition), or some other prayer to Saint Joseph, typical of the other liturgical traditions, in favor of the Church persecuted ad intra and ad extra and for the relief of all Christians who suffer all forms of persecution.

Saint Teresa of Avila recognized in Saint Joseph the protector of all the circumstances of life: "It seems to others the Lord gave them grace to help in a need; to this glorious Saint I have experience who helps in all" [5]. More recently, Saint John Paul II reiterated that the figure of Saint Joseph acquires "a renewed relevance for the Church of our time, in relation to the new Christian millennium" [6].

In order to reaffirm the universality of the patronage of the Church by Saint Joseph, in addition to the aforementioned occasions, the Apostolic Penitentiary grants a plenary indulgence to the faithful who pray any lawfully approved prayer or act of piety in honor of Saint Joseph, for example "To you", oh blessed Joseph ", especially on March 19 and May 1, feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, the Sunday of Saint Joseph (according to the Byzantine

tradition), the 19 of every month and every Wednesday, a day dedicated to the memory of the Saint according to the Latin tradition.

In the current context of health emergency, the gift of plenary indulgence extends particularly to the elderly, the sick, the dying and all those who for legitimate reasons cannot leave their home, who, with the spirit detached from any sin and with the intention of fulfilling, as soon as possible, the three usual conditions, in your own home or wherever the impediment holds you, pray an act of piety in honor of Saint Joseph, consolation of the sick and patron of good death, confidently offering God the pains and difficulties of his life.

In order for the achievement of divine grace through the power of the Keys to be facilitated pastorally, this Penitentiary earnestly pleads that all priests with the appropriate faculties offer themselves willingly and generously to the celebration of the Sacrament of Penance and administer to Holy Communion to the sick often.

This decree is valid for the Year of Saint Joseph, notwithstanding any provision to the contrary.

*Given in Rome, by the See of the Apostolic Penitentiary, on December 8, 2020.*

Mauro Card. Piacenza  
*Penitentiary Major*

Krzysztof Nykiel  
*Regent*

*L. + S.*  
*Prot. No. 866/20 / I*

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[1] Pius XI, *Speech on the occasion of the proclamation of the heroic virtues of the Servant of God Emilia de Vialar* in " *L'Osservatore Romano* ", year LXXV, n.67, March 1935.

[2] Francis, *General Audience* (February 3, 2016)

[3] Pius XII, *Address on the occasion of the Solemnity of Saint Joseph the Worker*, ( May 1, 1955) in *Discorsi e Radiomessaggi di Sua Santità Pio XII*, XVII 71-76.

[4] Francisco, *Angelus* (29 December 2013)

[5] Teresa de Ávila, *Book of Life*, VI, 6.

[6] John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Redemptoris Custos*, on the figure and mission of Saint Joseph in the life of Christ and of the Church (August 15, 1989).

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*Bulletin of the Press Office of the Holy See*, December 8, 2020.