

St. Joseph: Foster-Father of the Son of God

1. St. Joseph, A True Father

Chosen by the Trinity - Representative of the Heavenly Father, Son Subjected Himself, Spirit Gave His Bride

~“It belonged to His Heavenly Father to confer upon Him His name: that is the father’s office and right; and the Eternal Father transferred this right to Joseph...” *The Life and Glories of St. Joseph*, by Edward Healy Thompson, Tan, 1980, p.197.

~Matthew 1:21 “She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus” - angelic message to Joseph

Circumcision of a Son First Religious Obligation of a Father (Luke 2:21)

~“He willed to recognize this virgin spouse as His father in affection, adoption, government, and education, and to be constantly obedient and subject to him.” *The Life and Glories of St. Joseph*, p.197-198

Jesus called Himself the Son of Man and “and was obedient to them” (Luke 2:51)

Virginal Fruit of Virginal Marriage - With the Implied Consent of Joseph

~Luke 1:27 “to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph”

Mary Calls Him the Father of Jesus

~ Luke 2:48 “Your father and I have been looking for you with great anxiety.”

2. A Father’s Offices

~Matthew 2:20 “take the child and his mother”

~“first, that of laboring in order to supply His needs; secondly, that of rearing and instructing Him as He grew; thirdly, that of acting as His parent and guardian.” *The Life and Glories of St. Joseph*, p.291

Provider

Labor and Anxiety of Joseph to Provide - Bethlehem, Egypt, Nazareth

~““All wait upon Thee to give them food in season.” (Ps. 103:27). But this Sovereign Provider wills, O great saint, to seek from thy hands His own aliment.” *The Life and Glories of St. Joseph*, p.293

Filii Dei Nutricie

Teacher

~“the father is by right the teacher and instructor of his child.” *The Life and Glories of St. Joseph*, p.295

~ Luke 2:52 “And Jesus advanced [in] wisdom and age and favor before God and man.”

~ “there was acquired knowledge in Him, which some call empiric...in Christ there was acquired knowledge, which is properly knowledge in a human fashion.” *Summa* p. iii q. ix a. 4

Tendency of Children to Imitation and Curiosity

~John 5:19-20 “Jesus answered and said to them, “Amen, amen, I say to you, a son cannot do anything on his own, but only what he sees his father doing; for what he does, his son will do also. For the Father loves his Son and shows him everything that he himself does.””

~”In other words, you are teaching most about the virtues, indeed about yourself, when you scarcely realize it. Your snatches of conversation, your reactions to events (good and bad), your assessment of people, and your dealings with them, your earnest personal prayer, your exertion in work and play, your comments on the news, your humor, whatever angers or delights you, even the look in your eyes: all these details sink into your children’s minds and hearts.” *Compass: A Handbook on Parent Leadership* by James Stenson, Scepter, 2003, p.22.

~Luke 2:46 “After three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions”

Protector

~Matthew 2:13 “Rise, take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. Herod is going to search for the child to destroy him.”

Zealous Defender of Christ

Father of a Bright and Cheerful Home

~“How can we sufficiently admire the unremitting, uncomplaining, self-sacrificing toil of Joseph...” *The Life and Glories of St. Joseph*, p.344.

Joy, Humor, Affection, Mutual Love - Set the Tone

3. Our Father Too

Spiritual Paternity

Like Mary “Woman, behold Thy Son.” (John 19:27) “take the child and his mother” (Matthew 2:13,20)

Imitate Jesus in belonging to Joseph and Mary

~“As it pleased God that Joseph should take the place of father to His Only Son, He gave him in consequence a grace of paternity towards all men, made him incline all his thoughts and all his affections towards them, and moves him to procure for them as much good as could the tenderest of fathers for his children.” *Life of the Venerable Mother Magdalen of St. Joseph*, lib. ii. cap. iv. quoted in *Life and Glories of St. Joseph*, p.407.