



THE YEAR OF ST JOSEPH

Resource for Families



Forming lives ready to face the future

This year has been extremely challenging for everybody. The Coronavirus pandemic has brought about anxiety, loss and grief in various forms. It has also put immense pressure on families and family life; working from home, school closures, lack of contact and support from family and friends all have compiled to create a situation few families in all of history have experienced. They say it takes a village to raise a child, but our villages have been much smaller over the past year. This, undoubtedly, has taken its toll; mentally, emotionally and spiritually.

However, Pope Francis has given us this Year of St Joseph, with St Joseph the hero of family life in adversity, to guide and pray for us as we navigate the months ahead. And, indeed, to help us in acknowledging and celebrating our achievements as families. That we have, despite the challenges, spent more time together as a family unit than ever; shared more meals, conversations, jokes, games, laughter, tears and tribulations. We have spent time falling over each other, on top of each other - which may have brought about its frustrations - but also a closeness and solidarity that we may never have anticipated prior to the pandemic.

This resource seeks to support you in celebrating your family, with all its quirks and nuances and imperfections. Because, to God, all families are precious and perfect in their uniqueness.

With St Joseph and the Holy Family as our inspiration, may God bless and guide our families.

Family Prayers

<p>Prayer for the Year of St Joseph - Pope Francis</p> <p><i>Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary. To you God entrusted His only Son; in you Mary placed her trust; with you Christ became man.</i></p> <p><i>Blessed Joseph, to us too, show yourself a father and guide us in the path of life. Obtain for us grace, mercy and courage, and defend us from every evil. Amen.</i></p>	<p>Prayer of St Joseph for Children</p> <p>St Joseph,</p> <p>Be a father to me, as you were to Jesus. Guide me, as I go through life; teach me courage, loyalty and to give my best to the work I do.</p> <p>St Joseph, Protector of families, pray for my family and all those I love.</p> <p>Amen.</p>
<p>Lord,</p> <p>We ask for Your blessing on our family. With St Joseph as our guide and inspiration, May we seek to love and serve each other and, in this way, love and serve You too.</p> <p>We ask this, through Christ our Lord, Amen.</p>	<p>Blessed St Joseph, We ask for your intercession, as we strive to imitate: your courage in times of darkness, your resilience in times of challenge and your joy in times of celebration.</p> <p>Pray for our family and the work we do, as, like you, we seek to love and serve God in the way we love and serve each other. Amen.</p>
<p>Traditional Grace Before Meals:</p> <p>Bless us, O Lord, and these Thy gifts,</p>	<p>Modern Grace Before Meals:</p> <p>Bless us, O Lord, as we sit together,</p>

which we are about to receive
from Thy bounty,
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Bless the food we eat today,
Bless the hands that make our food,
Bless us, O Lord.
Amen.

Family Discussion

In these times of having spent so much time together,
sometimes conversation around the dinner table may run dry.
Here are some discussion topic suggestions,
some especially in light of the pandemic and Lockdown,
as an opportunity to reflect on the times you have shared:

What has been the best part of your day?

If you had three wishes, what would you wish for?

If you could switch places with me/us (adults in the family) for the day,
what would you do?

How have you helped someone today?

If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go and why?

What three words would you use to describe yourself?

If you could be a famous person for a week, who would you be and why?

If you could be an animal, what would you be and why?

What is your ultimate dream or ambition?

What have been the positives of the past year and Lockdown?

What have been the challenges of the past year and Lockdown?

How have we grown as a family during the past year?

Is there anything we need to work on to help us grow as a family?

Family 'Holy Work' Activity

With St Joseph the Worker as our inspiration, this year, we aim to celebrate the work we do - big and small - as important and holy work.

This is especially important within the family.

Do we appreciate the little things each of us does to contribute to family life?

Do we need to show this more in our thanks or actions?

Do I need to contribute to the life of our family more?

You may wish to look at the Holy Work Chart attached.

Perhaps explore with your children some jobs they could do to contribute to family life within your home.

You could discuss the idea of 'offering up' their time and service to God and how, with St Joseph as our guide, all work is Holy Work.

You may even wish to develop your own family prayer

to help your children offer up their Holy Work

or teach them to say a Prayer of St Joseph before they begin.

These Holy Work tasks can be as great or small as you think fit,

but a suggestion might be for them to carry out the tasks

which would help the daily life of the household run more smoothly:

putting shoes away; hanging coats up;

putting school bags in a sensible place; etc.

To support you in this,

when your children have shown commitment to their Holy Work

for a period of time as you deem fit,

they could bring their chart to school

to celebrate with their teachers and classmates.

The Family Holy Work Commitment Chart



*Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
To you God entrusted His only Son;
In you Mary placed her trust;
with you Christ became man.*

*Blessed Joseph,
show yourself a father
and guide us in the path of life.
Obtain fore us grace, mercy and courage
and defend us from every evil.
Amen.*

St Joseph,
Be a father to me,
as you were to Jesus.
Guide me, as I go through life;
teach me courage, loyalty
and to give my best to the work I do.

St Joseph,
Protector of families,
pray for my family
and all those I love.
Amen.

Holy Work task:	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday