

14th Day of the 33-Day Preparation for Consecration to St. Joseph

St. Joseph is the “Zealous Defender of Christ”

Dear parishioners of Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish,

St. Joseph can teach us how to be more courageous and more dedicated to defending Jesus Christ. St. Joseph is the only human being who can truly say that he defended and saved Jesus. St. Joseph protected the baby Jesus from being killed by taking him and Mary into Egypt.

Here are some quotations which help us to reflect on this amazing truth:

In some translations of the Litany of St. Joseph, the title “Zealous Defender of Christ” (in Latin, *Christi Defensor Sedule*) is given as “Diligent Defender of Christ” or “Watchful Defender of Christ.” Both are acceptable translations and have similar meanings — namely, St. Joseph defended Jesus. As a child of St. Joseph, you can have great confidence knowing that your spiritual father also desires to zealously defend you.

— Fr. Don Calloway

SAINT JOSEPH WILL INCREASE YOUR ZEAL FOR CHRIST.

YOUR DEFENSE OF CHRIST MUST BE GREAT. You should always strive to defend the person and name of Jesus Christ against all blasphemy, insult, and sacrilege. You must defend the Church, as well as her teachings and Sacraments, from all attacks, heresies, and falsehoods.

— Fr. Don Calloway

Joseph is called the “Savior of the Savior” because he rescued the Child Jesus by fleeing with him to Egypt. (Matthew 2:13-14)

We think society today is full of chaos and terror. This is nothing compared to what happened in France during the French Revolution (the “Terror”). During this terrible time, Blessed William Joseph Chaminade spread devotion to Mary and preached fervently about St. Joseph. He encouraged his religious brothers to “act as the heel of Mary and crush the darkness of the revolution.”

— Fr. Don Calloway

To give life to someone is the greatest of all gifts. To save a life is the next. Who gave life to Jesus? It was Mary. Who saved his life? It was Joseph. Ask St. Paul who persecuted him. Saint Peter who denied him. Ask all the saints who put him to death. But if we ask, “Who saved his life?” Be silent, patriarchs, be silent, prophets, be silent, apostles, confessors, and martyrs. Let St. Joseph speak, for this honor is his alone; he alone is the savior of his Savior.

— Blessed William Joseph Chaminade

Fr. Don Calloway tells this story about a miraculous intervention of St. Joseph during World War II:

There were many priests (and bishops) in the Dachau concentration camp. According to official records, 2,579 Catholic priests were in Dachau. Of these, 1,034 of the priests died there. Saint Joseph helped them in their suffering and gave them the strength to offer their lives for love of Jesus. As for the other 1,545 priests who survived Dachau, all of them attribute their liberation from the camp on April 29, 1945, to the powerful intercession of St. Joseph. Here’s the story. The first Catholic priests arrived in Dachau in 1939. In the

following months and years, the numbers continued to grow because priests were transferred to Dachau from the Auschwitz and Sachsenhausen concentration camps. On December 8, 1940, the priests in Dachau made a communal act of consecration to St. Joseph, asking him to help them survive their ordeal and save them from death. They consecrated themselves to St. Joseph in particular because it was St. Joseph who had saved the Son of God from death when Herod wanted to kill him, and the priests knew that he had the power to save them from the Nazis as well. The act of consecration to St. Joseph was frequently renewed. The imprisoned priests also renewed the consecration annually in a more solemn manner. Additionally, the priests prayed novenas to St. Joseph asking for help in their dire situation. When the camp was finally liberated in 1945, the remaining priests testified that it was St. Joseph who was responsible for their survival. In thanksgiving, many of the priests — especially the priests from Poland — organized a pilgrimage to the Shrine of St. Joseph in Kalisz, Poland, in 1948.

— Fr. Don Calloway

Pope St. John Paul II visited the Kalisz shrine in 1997 and gave this inspiring reflection:

The angel had warned him [St. Joseph] to flee with the child, because he was threatened by mortal danger. From the Gospel we learn about those who were threatening the child's life. In the first place Herod, but then also all his [Herod's] followers. Joseph of Nazareth, who saved Jesus from the cruelty of Herod, is shown to us in this moment as a great supporter of the cause of the defense of human life, from the first moment of conception to natural death. In this place, therefore, we wish to commend human life to Divine Providence and to St. Joseph, especially the life of children not yet born, in our homeland and throughout the world.
— Pope St. John Paul II (June 4, 1997)

Please pray the Litany of St. Joseph every day at home for the intention of consecrating our parish to St. Joseph on March 19th!

Fr. Mark