

## 5<sup>th</sup> Day of the 33-Day Preparation for Consecration to St. Joseph

Why Consecrate our parish to St. Joseph?

Dear parishioners of Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish,

Today is the first Friday of Lent, and we will be gathering in the church for the Stations of the Cross at 6:00 PM. (Spanish stations will be at 7:30 PM)

Of course, St. Joseph was not there when Jesus had to carry his Cross. St. Joseph had died before Jesus began his public ministry. Nevertheless St. Joseph can help us to think about carrying our Crosses. St. Joseph was a carpenter. He knew how to carry wood and to work hard to sacrifice for the sake of his beloved Holy Family. Joseph did everything for Jesus and for Mary, and he probably also knew that he could offer his prayers and sacrifices for to save the souls of poor sinners. Joseph was a Jewish man, and so he knew about the value of fasting and atonement for the sins of the nation. The Jews had a special day called the “day of atonement” during which they would fast in atonement for their own sins and for the sins of their entire nation. At that time there was a Jewish group called the Essene who practiced fasting, abstinence and celibacy, and St. Joseph was almost certainly influenced by these ideas.

The saints tell us that Joseph offered to God not only his physical exertion and penances, but also a certain spiritual suffering that he had to endure. It is said that the Holy Spirit revealed to him how his Son Jesus was going to have to suffer a cruel death by crucifixion (perhaps he saw it in a dream!), and that he was not going to be able to be there to support his Son and his wife at that terrible time. This certainly must have caused St. Joseph a terrible heartache. But St. Joseph endured and offered all this as a prayer for sinners.

For this day of our preparation for the Feast of St. Joseph, March 19, we can reflect on several quotations given to us by Fr. Don Calloway in his book “Consecration to St. Joseph.” Fr. Calloway teaches us that Holy Spirit was present in the life of the Holy Family because the love that they had for one another was similar to the love that circulates with the Holy Trinity!

Consider that the entire life of Saint Joseph was interior and hidden in God; so little known to the world that but a few holy writers mention him in a few places; and of his death give no information. His was a life of prayer, quiet work, and constant sacrifice, and at the same time, a life shining with the splendor of all virtues.  
— St. Joseph Sebastian Pelczar

There is a general rule concerning all special graces granted to any human being. Whenever the divine favor chooses someone to receive a special grace, or to accept a lofty vocation, God adorns the person chosen with all the gifts of the Spirit needed to fulfill the task at hand. This general rule is especially verified in the case of St. Joseph.

— St. Bernardine of Siena

He [St. Joseph] is head of the Holy Family, father of the trinity on earth which resembles so closely the Holy Trinity on high.

— St. Peter Julian Eymard

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