



the Redeemer. Joseph also faithfully made the pilgrimages to Jerusalem to the Temple on the occasion of Passover, Pentecost and the feast of Tabernacles. At home he could provide such a wealth of edifying information about the Temple, the priests and their sacrifices, the teachers of the law and the crowds of pilgrims, so that the excitement and longing of the divine Boy grew and grew to be finally allowed to make a pilgrimage there Himself. With st Joseph the religious life sprang from his innermost soul. He was most intimately united to GOD, as he was initiated into the mysteries of the most holy Mother and deemed worthy of divine missions himself. His life was a continuous worship of GOD and very conscientious assistance in the salvation of the world.

Joseph was a faithful and serious worker, with the open, cheerful heart of a child, an example of good praying. To him praying and working were a living belief. May st Joseph obtain for us by prayer something of his belief.

This Month's Heartfelt Matters

- Let us ask st Joseph to grant us the grace of an inner life, contemplation in prayer and work.

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With kindest regards and the blessing of saint Joseph I am with you every day,

Sister Paula



September 2015

Lay Community of St Joseph

Priority of the Interior Life

The same aura of silence that envelops everything else about Joseph also shrouds his work as a carpenter in the house of Nazareth. It is, however, a silence that reveals in a special way the inner being of this man. The Gospels speak exclusively of what Joseph "did." Still, they allow us to discover in his "actions" – shrouded at times in silence – an aura of deep contemplation. Joseph was in daily contact with the mystery "hidden from ages past," and which "dwelt" under his roof. This explains, for example, why st Teresa of Jesus, the great reformer of the contemplative Carmelite Order, so emphatically promoted the renewal of veneration to st Joseph in Western Christianity.

The total sacrifice, whereby Joseph surrendered his whole existence to the demands of the Messiah's coming into his home, becomes understandable only in the light of his profound interior life. It was from this interior life that "very singular commands and consolations came, bringing him also the logic and strength that belong to simple and clear souls, and giving him the power of making great decisions – such as the decision to put his liberty

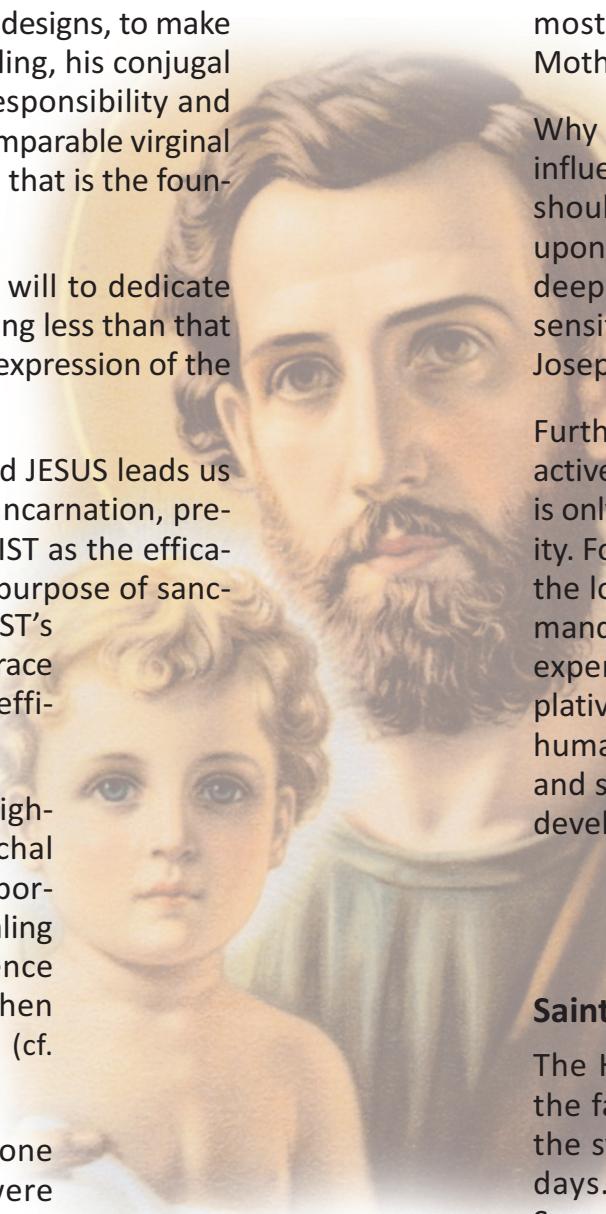
immediately at the disposition of the divine designs, to make over to them also his legitimate human calling, his conjugal happiness, to accept the conditions, the responsibility and the burden of a family, but, through an incomparable virginal love, to renounce that natural conjugal love that is the foundation and nourishment of the family."

This submission to GOD, this readiness of will to dedicate oneself to all that serves Him, is really nothing less than that exercise of devotion which constitutes one expression of the virtue of fear of GOD.

The communion of life between Joseph and JESUS leads us to consider once again the mystery of the Incarnation, precisely in reference to the humanity of CHRIST as the efficacious instrument of the divine will for the purpose of sanctifying man: „By virtue of His divinity, CHRIST's human actions were salvific for us, causing grace within us, either by merit or by a certain efficacy.“

Among these actions, the gospel writers highlight those which have to do with the Paschal Mystery, but they also underscore the importance of physical contact with JESUS for healing (cf., for example, Mark 1,41), and the influence JESUS exercised upon John the Baptist when they were both in their mothers' wombs (cf. Luke 1,41-44). ...

If through CHRIST's humanity this love shone on all mankind, the first beneficiaries were undoubtedly those whom the divine will had



most closely, intimately associated with itself: Mary, the Mother of JESUS, and Joseph, His nursing and foster Father.

Why should the "fatherly" love of Joseph not have had an influence upon the "filial" love of JESUS? And vice versa why should the "filial" love of JESUS not have had an influence upon the "fatherly" love of Joseph, thus leading to a further deepening of their unique relationship? Those souls most sensitive to the impulses of divine love have rightly seen in Joseph a brilliant example of the interior life.

Furthermore, in Joseph, the apparent tension between the active and the contemplative life finds an ideal harmony that is only possible for those who possess the perfection of charity. Following st Augustine's well-known distinction between the love of the truth (*caritas veritatis*) and the practical demands of love (*necessitas caritatis*), we can say that Joseph experienced both love of the truth, i.e. that pure contemplative love of the divine truth which radiated from CHRIST's humanity, and the demands of love, i.e. that equally pure and selfless love required for his vocation to safeguard and develop the humanity of JESUS.

Excerpt from the apostolic exhortation
of Pope John Paul II on saint Joseph

Saint Joseph and His Life of Prayer

The Holy Family regularly prayed under the guidance of the father of their family. St Joseph also regularly went to the synagogue on the Sabbath, sometimes also on weekdays. The service consisted of lectures, expounding on Sacred Scripture, of psalms and prayers for the coming of