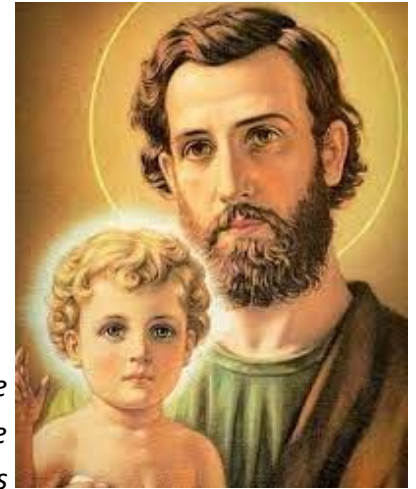


March is dedicated to:

Saint Joseph

Quemadmodum Deus-On Saint Joseph

POPE PIUS IX



On December 8, 1870, The Sacred Congregation of Rites promulgated the following decree, which communicated the decision of Pope Pius IX to declare St. Joseph Patron of the Universal Church, and which also raised St. Joseph's feast of March 19 to the rank of double of the first class.

As almighty God appointed Joseph, son of the patriarch Jacob, over all the land of Egypt to save grain for the people, so when the fullness of time had come and He was about to send to earth His only-begotten Son, the Savior of the world, He chose another Joseph, of whom the first had been the type, and He made him the lord and chief of His household and possessions, the guardian of His choicest treasures.

Indeed, he had as his spouse the Immaculate Virgin Mary, of whom was born by the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ our Lord, who deigned to be reputed in the sight of men as the son of Joseph, and was subject to him.

Him whom countless kings and prophets had desired to see, Joseph not only saw but conversed with, and embraced in paternal affection, and kissed. He most diligently reared Him whom the faithful were to receive as the bread that came down from heaven whereby they might obtain eternal life.

Because of this sublime dignity which God conferred on his most faithful servant, the Church has always most highly honored and praised blessed Joseph next to his spouse, the Virgin Mother of God, and has besought his intercession in times of trouble.

And now therefore, when in these most troublesome times the Church is beset by enemies on every side, and is weighed down by calamities so heavy that ungodly men assert that the gates of hell have at length prevailed against her, the venerable prelates of the whole Catholic world have presented to the Sovereign Pontiff their own petitions and those of the faithful committed to their charge, praying that he would deign to constitute St. Joseph Patron of the Church. And this time their prayer and desire was renewed by them even more earnestly at the Sacred Ecumenical Council of the Vatican.

Accordingly, it has now pleased our Most Holy Sovereign, Pope Pius IX, in order to entrust himself and all the faithful to the Patriarch St. Joseph's most powerful patronage, has chosen to comply with the prelates' desire and has solemnly declared him Patron of the Catholic Church.

He has also ordered that his feast on March 19th by henceforth celebrated as a double of the first class, without any Octave, however, because of Lent. He arranged, moreover, that a declaration to this effect be promulgated through the present decree of The Sacred Congregation of Rites on this day sacred to the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God, the most chaste Joseph's Spouse. All things to the contrary notwithstanding.