

## Why did the Pope Declare

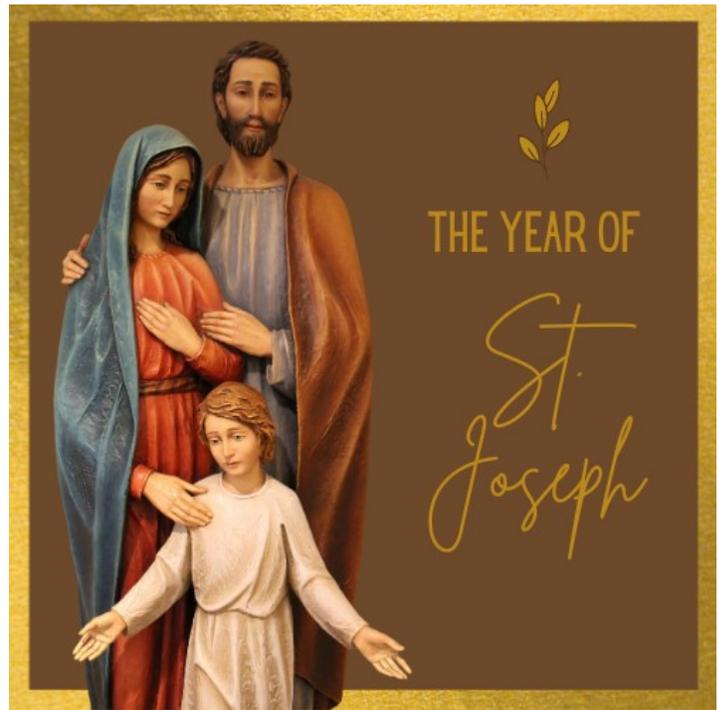
### “A Year of St. Joseph”?

In making his declaration, Pope Francis noted that this year marks the 150th anniversary of the saint’s proclamation as patron of the Universal Church by Pope Pius IX on Dec. 8, 1870.

Pope Francis said the coronavirus pandemic has heightened his desire to reflect on St. Joseph, as so many people during the pandemic have made hidden sacrifices to protect others, just as St. Joseph quietly protected and cared for Mary and Jesus.

“Each of us can discover in Joseph -- the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence -- an intercessor, a support and a guide in times of trouble,” the pope wrote.

He also said he wanted to highlight St. Joseph’s role as a father who served his family with charity and humility, adding, “Our world today needs fathers.”



## What Special Graces Are Available During This Year?

As Catholics pray and reflect on the life of St. Joseph throughout the coming year, they also have opportunities to gain a plenary indulgence, or remission of all temporal punishment due to sin. An indulgence can be applied to oneself or to a soul in Purgatory.

An indulgence requires a specific act, defined by the Church, as well as sacramental confession, Eucharistic Communion, prayer for the pope’s intentions, and full detachment from sin.

Special indulgences during the Year of St. Joseph can be received through more than a dozen different prayers and actions, including praying for the unemployed, entrusting one’s daily work to St. Joseph, performing a corporal or spiritual work of mercy, or meditating for at least 30 minutes on the Lord’s Prayer.

## Why Does the Church Honor

### St. Joseph?

Catholics do not worship saints, but ask for their heavenly intercession before God and seek to imitate their virtues here on earth. The Catholic Church honors St. Joseph as the foster father of Jesus. He is invoked as the patron saint of the Universal Church. He is also the patron of workers, fathers, and a happy death.

There is not one recorded word of St. Joseph spoken in the Gospel but we know him as a man of action. Spiritual writers give St. Joseph many attributes, saying he was a very religious man, he was civic-minded, humble, a hard worker, obedient to the will of God, a provider to his family, Jesus and Mary, and the protector of the holy family. Pope Francis declared this year as the Year of St. Joseph, partially because it is the 150th anniversary of Bl. Pius IX declaring Saint Joseph patron of the universal Church in 1870.

### *Consecration to St. Joseph*

*O dearest St. Joseph, I consecrate myself to thy honor and give myself to thee, that thou mayest always be my father, my protector, and my guide in the way of salvation. Obtain for me a great purity of heart and a fervent love of the interior life. After thine example, may I do all my actions for the greater glory of God, in union with the Divine Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary! And do thou, O Blessed St. Joseph, pray for me that I may share in the peace and joy of thy holy death.*

*Amen.*