

# Catholic Year for St. Joseph

December 8, 2020 – December 8, 2021

On December 8<sup>th</sup>, Pope Francis decreed a special Catholic Year for St. Joseph, Father, 'Unnoticed' Worker, as the world continues to undergo the "grave tribulation" of the coronavirus pandemic.

The special year, coinciding with the 150th anniversary of the 1870 naming of St. Joseph as patron of the universal church, will run through Dec. 8, 2021.

In the papal letter, titled *Patris Corde* ("With a Father's Heart"), Pope Francis says he had been thinking about the move for some time but his desire to decree the special year "increased" as the pandemic unfolded. The pope compares Joseph, Jesus' foster father, to the many unheralded essential workers keeping society afloat in times of social distancing and remote work.

We have experienced, amid the crisis, how "our lives are woven together and sustained by ordinary people, people often overlooked. People who do not appear in newspaper and magazine headlines, or on the latest television show, yet in these very days are surely shaping the decisive events of our history. Doctors, nurses, storekeepers and supermarket workers, cleaning personnel, caregivers, transport workers, men and women working to provide essential services and public safety, volunteers, priests, men and women religious, and so very many others. They understood that no one is saved alone... How many people daily exercise patience and offer hope, taking care to spread not panic, but shared responsibility. How many fathers, mothers, grandparents and teachers are showing our children, in small everyday ways, how to accept and deal with a crisis by adjusting their routines, looking ahead and encouraging the practice of prayer. How many are praying, making sacrifices and interceding for the good of all."

"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," writes the pontiff. "Saint Joseph reminds us that those who appear hidden or in the shadows can play an incomparable role in the history of salvation."

Pope Francis' new letter describes Joseph as a father who was beloved, tender, obedient to God, accepting, "creatively courageous," a hard-worker and "in the shadows."

The pontiff also notes that the saint is traditionally described as a carpenter, "who earned an honest living to provide for his family." "Saint Joseph's work reminds us that God himself, in becoming man, did not disdain work," states Pope Francis. "The loss of employment that affects so many of our brothers and sisters, and has increased as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, should serve as a summons to review our priorities," the pope continues.

"Let us implore Saint Joseph the Worker to help us find ways to express our firm conviction that no young person, no person at all, no family should be without work!"

His letter can be found at:

[http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_letters/documents/papa-francesco-lettera-ap\\_20201208\\_patris-corde.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_letters/documents/papa-francesco-lettera-ap_20201208_patris-corde.html)

I join with him in asking us to pray the prayer to St. Joseph daily:

*Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,  
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.  
To you God entrusted his only Son;  
in you Mary placed her trust;  
with you Christ became man.*

*Blessed Joseph, to us too,  
show yourself a father  
and guide us in the path of life.  
Obtain for us grace, mercy and courage,  
and defend us from every evil. Amen.*