



**National Catholic  
Partnership on Disability**  
Alianza Nacional Católica  
sobre la Discapacidad

# **Adapted Faith Formation Activities for March St. Joseph**



Council on Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities

# Family Faith Formation



“The witness of Christian life given by parents in the family comes to children with tenderness and parental respect. Children thus perceive and joyously live the closeness of God and of Jesus made manifest by their parents in such a way that the first Christian experience frequently leaves decisive traces which last throughout life.”

–General Directory for Catechesis #226



## Four Keys for Practicing Faith

- **Caring Conversations**
- **Family Devotions and Prayer**
- **Family Rituals and Traditions**
- **Family Service**

[https://ncpd.org/files/file\\_uploads/Four\\_Keys\\_for\\_Practicing\\_Faith\\_.pdf](https://ncpd.org/files/file_uploads/Four_Keys_for_Practicing_Faith_.pdf)



# Caring Conversations

## St. Joseph

Every year, March 19 is celebrated as the Feast of St. Joseph, the husband of Mary and Guardian of Christ. This year the feast has special meaning because Pope Francis has dedicated 2021 to St. Joseph. The following link is for the Holy Father's apostolic letter proclaiming the year of Joseph and offering reflections on Joseph's life and example (<https://tinyurl.com/hifo2lq9>).

The Litany of St. Joseph (<https://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/prayers-and-devotions/litanies/litany-of-saint-joseph>) lists a number of titles that have been given to Joseph down through the ages. During this month, your family can choose one title each week and discuss how St. Joseph lived it out and how you can imitate him. You can also talk about individuals in your lives who embody one or more of St. Joseph's characteristics. Because this is the Year of St. Joseph, you may even want to continue these conversations after March.

Options:

- Cut out each of the titles noted below. Select a family member to randomly pick one of the titles to discuss.

Noble Son of the House of David	Light of Patriarchs	Husband of the Mother of God
Guardian of the Virgin	Foster Father of the Son of God	Faithful Guardian of Christ
Head of the Holy Family	Chaste and Just	Prudent and Brave
Obedient and Loyal	Pattern of Patience	Lover of Poverty
Model of Workers	Example to Parents	Guardian of Virgins
Pillar of Family Life	Comfort of the Troubled	Hope of the Sick
Patron of the Dying	Terror of Evil Spirits	Protector of the Church

Loved ones can also color or decorate a picture of St. Joseph that represents the title being discussed. See some samples on the next page.



## Model of Workers



## Faithful Guardian of Christ



*images from: clipart-library.com*

# Family Devotions and Prayer

## *The Litany of St. Joseph*

### **Leader**

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

God our Father in heaven,

God the Son, Redeemer of the world,

God the Holy Spirit,

Holy Trinity, one God,

Holy Mary,

Saint Joseph,

Noble son of the House of David,

Light of patriarchs,

Husband of the Mother of God,

### **Response**

*Lord, have mercy.*

*Christ, have mercy.*

*Lord, have mercy.*

*have mercy on us.*

*have mercy on us.*

*have mercy on us.*

*have mercy on us.*

*pray for us.*

*pray for us.*

*pray for us.*

*pray for us.*

*pray for us.*



Guardian of the Virgin,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Foster father of the Son of God,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Faithful guardian of Christ,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Head of the Holy Family,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Joseph, chaste and just,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Joseph, prudent and brave,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Joseph, obedient and loyal,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Pattern of patience,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Lover of poverty,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Model of workers,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Example to parents,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Guardian of virgins,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Pillar of family life,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Comfort of the troubled,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Hope of the sick,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Patron of the dying,	<i>pray for us.</i>



Terror of evil spirits,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Protector of the Church,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,	<i>have mercy on us.</i>
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,	<i>have mercy on us.</i>
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,	<i>have mercy on us.</i>
God made him master of his household,	<i>And put him in charge of all that he owned.</i>

**Let us pray.**

O God, who in your inexpressible providence  
were pleased to choose Saint Joseph  
as spouse of the most holy Mother of your Son,  
grant, we pray,  
that we, who revere him as our protector on earth,  
may be worthy of his heavenly intercession.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**R/. Amen.**





# Family Ritual and Tradition

## *St. Joseph*

St. Joseph's feast day is on March 19th. Perhaps your family may consider starting a new tradition of recognizing individuals in your lives who emulate St. Joseph. You can celebrate these individuals in a special way on St. Joseph's feast day. There are a number of ways your family can acknowledge this person. For example, you can invite him or her to join you for a family meal—even if it's a “virtual meal.” Or you can surprise him or her with a phone call or video call and have different family members say a few words of thanks to him or her. Or maybe you can send a specially made card like the one below.

St. Joseph has many attributes that your family can reflect on as you talk about these people. Has someone been a trusted guardian to you or a loved one? Has he or she taught you valuable lessons about parenthood? Is he or she brave, patient, or loyal? Is this person gifted in bringing comfort to those who are troubled? After your conversation, family members can select one or more of these “St. Josephs” and determine how they will be celebrated.

Joseph is also the patron saint of the Universal Church, unborn children, fathers, workers, travelers, immigrants, and a happy death. Is someone you know in a situation where Joseph's prayers could be especially helpful? Ask Joseph to pray for that person.

On the next page is a sample card that can be given to your chosen person on St. Joseph's feast day.





Dear

In honor of St. Joseph's feast day on March 19th, our family has chosen to celebrate you. Like St. Joseph, you have shown our family

patience, comfort, etc.

Thank you for being an inspiration for us!

Love,

# Family Service

## St. Joseph

Before Jesus was born, Joseph had decided to divorce Mary. However, he changed his mind and chose to obey God's command. Scripture tells us, *"When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home"* (Matthew 1:24). After Jesus' birth, an angel of the Lord told Joseph that the wicked King Herod was going to destroy Jesus. Joseph obeyed the angel's warning and took his family to safety: *"Joseph rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed for Egypt"* (Matthew 2:14). Later, the angel again appeared to Joseph in a dream and told him it was safe to return home. Once more, Joseph obeyed: *"He rose, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel"* (Matthew 2:21).

Just as St. Joseph teaches us about obeying God, family members can choose to obey God by letting Him redirect their actions, thoughts, and words. Joseph also served God by taking care of Mary and Jesus. Family members can do the same by taking care of each other.

During the month of March, "Family Service" can focus on the members of your own family. The truth is, family members have numerous opportunities to serve each other every day (i.e., laundry, meals, taking out the trash, etc.). However, many times these actions go unnoticed—possibly because they have become routine and expected. So this month, be on the lookout for moments when loved ones take care of each other. When you spot an example, give a special "shout out" to that person and specify what he/she has done (i.e., "Thank you, John, for doing the dishes!" Or "Great work, Gabby, for taking your medicine!"). By recognizing the way they care for each other—even if it's just by caring for themselves—family members are acknowledging their service to God.

"Shout Outs" can be said in passing throughout the day, or family members can keep a running list and go through it during the family meal. You can also give special notes, tokens, or cards when you catch someone serving the family. Following is a simple "shout out" card that you use or adapt.





Shout out to -

Thank you for -

Love,

# Further Reflection

## Finding Comfort in Silence

The book *Faith, Family, and Children with Special Needs* (<https://store.loyolapress.com/faith-family-and-children-with-special-needs>) talks about how Catholic parents and their children with special needs can develop a richer spiritual life. The author, David Rizzo, makes a key point that people with disabilities are not spiritually disabled. David is the father of a daughter who has autism and is also nonverbal. He compares the love of his silent daughter with the love of our silent God. David writes, “To a large degree, the spiritual part of our lives is associated more with this type of nonverbal and emotional processing than with conceptual language.”

We may need to be reminded at times that individuals do not need to speak in order to enhance their spiritual lives. If a loved one is silent for any reason, you can take comfort in the idea that their silence may be their way of connecting with God spiritually. Did you know that St. Joseph never says a single word in the Bible? He spends his time listening to God’s messengers and doing God’s will (Matthew 1:18-24; Matthew 2:13-15; Matthew 2:19-23). St. Joseph’s quiet demeanor wasn’t an obstacle to his faith. In fact, it’s possible his silence helped him become more attuned to God’s will.

On the next page is a prayer in honor of loved ones who, like St. Joseph, are silent. Consider offering this prayer, either in your own personal prayer time or as a family.



## The Silence of Joseph

by Deacon Keith Fournier (<https://www.catholic.org/prayers/prayer.php?p=3409>)

The Silence of Joseph echoes in a world of noise turning a cacophony of self-love into a melody of self-surrender.

The Silence of Joseph is a seed which bears the fruit of holiness and courage.

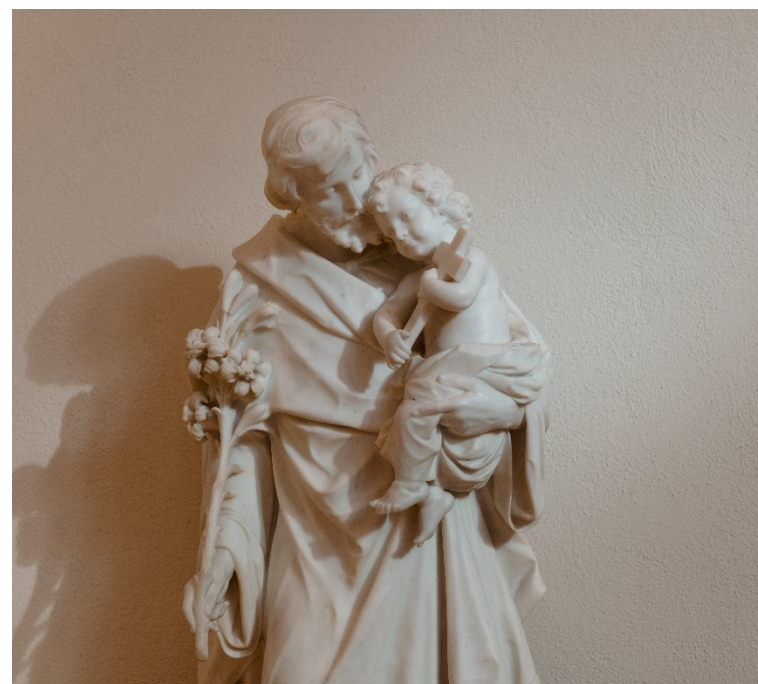
The Silence of Joseph drowns the din of sorrow and silences the wailing of the weak.

The Silence of Joseph draws the world to a cave in Bethlehem where God is born as man and man is born again.

The Silence of Joseph draws us to our knees in worship of the Word made flesh in whose presence all words of men lose their meaning.

The Silence of Joseph directs a symphony of silence which stills the universe in adoration of the One in Whom the New creation has come.

Let us join our silence to the Silence of Joseph.



## USCCB Scripture Resources

Daily Readings:

[English](#)

[Daily Readings Audio](#)

[Video Reflection](#)

Click on the links above to reflect on Scripture by reading, listening or viewing the reading.



# National Catholic Partnership on Disability

## Council on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

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For more information, please visit: [The National Catholic Partnership on Disability](#)  
[NCPD Council on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities](#)

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