



Soldiers of Christ

Newsletter of the
Isolated Franciscan Tertiaries
of the OFM Province of the
Immaculate Conception

March 2023

Sandy Baden, TOF, Editor

Vol 3, Issue 3

ST. JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

St. Joseph, beloved spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary and not a word did he speak in Scripture. How amazing does that seem when you think of the Virgin Mary and how she pondered all these things in her heart, and then recites the Magnificat (Lk: 1: 46-55) when she visits her cousin, Elizabeth. St. Joseph, in obedience to God, in a dream, did as the Angel had said to him and took Mary as his wife (Mt 1:24).

We read in the Scriptures, mainly in Luke, St. Joseph finds a cave for the birth of Jesus as there is no room in the inn. Then with Mary presents the child Jesus in the Temple in Jerusalem in obedience of the law of Moses which had commanded him. Again in a dream, Joseph takes the Holy Family as the Angel had given a warning and flees to escape Herod, avoiding his plan to harm Jesus. A third time the Angel of the Lord appears to Joseph, in a dream, and tells him to return from Egypt. Joseph takes the Holy Family and travels to a city called Nazareth. Lastly, we read of St. Joseph and Mary as they lose Jesus at the age of twelve, and then find him in the Temple in Jerusalem (Lk 2: 29-52). No more is mentioned in the Scriptures of St. Joseph, nor did he speak a word, as if he had just disappeared.

What a holy man St. Joseph was as he gave his "YES" in obedience to the will of God. He had complete trust in God and was obedient in all that was commanded of him. St. Joseph's life was a devotion to our Lord and the Blessed Virgin Mary. If only we could have been a fly on the wall in their home in Nazareth to listen to the conversations the Holy Family must have had together. Even to think about St. Joseph with Jesus in His infancy, and as Jesus grew to manhood, is something to ponder. St. Joseph was there, but becomes hidden somewhere in the background as Mary continued to keep these things in her heart.

Sandy Baden, GOF

There is a devotional prayer to St. Joseph that is over 1900 years old:

O St. Joseph whose protection is so great, so strong, so prompt before the Throne of God, I place in you all my interests and desires. O St. Joseph do assist me by your powerful intercession and obtain for me from your Divine Son all spiritual blessings through Jesus Christ, Our Lord; so that having engaged here below your Heavenly power I may offer my Thanksgiving and Homage to the most Loving of Fathers. O St. Joseph, I never weary contemplating you and Jesus asleep in your arms. I dare not approach while He reposes near your heart. Press Him in my name and kiss His fine head for me, and ask Him to return the Kiss when I draw my dying breath. St. Joseph, Patron of departing souls, pray for us. Amen

(This prayer was found in the fiftieth year of Our Lord Jesus Christ. In 1500's it was sent by the Pope to Emperor Charles when he was going into battle.)

(Found in the little blue Pieta Book)

A was poem written last year in the Soldiers of Christ Newsletter, March 2022. I submit again as a revised version for those Isolated Tertiaries that have not see it.

ST. JOSEPH, PROTECTOR OF THE HOLY FAMILY



St. Joseph, Son of David, not a word did you say in Scripture, but what a mark you made as part of the Holy Family. As a compassionate and caring man, after a dream, you took Mary as your wife to protect our Lord in the womb. You gave your “Yes” to God in your silence.

St. Joseph, Son of David, you presented Jesus to the Temple with Mary. Simeon was blessed as he had seen the Messiah. Not a word did you utter in Scripture, and Mary pondered all these things in her heart.

St. Joseph, Son of David, in your “Yes” you took the Holy Family, fled to Egypt, and again after a dream, protected Jesus from harm. Then later returned to Nazareth and not a word did you say in Scripture.

St. Joseph, Son of David, the Holy Family traveled to Jerusalem twelve years later for the Passover, and lost Jesus. Three days later you and Mary found Him in the Temple with sorrow and anxiety. Not a word was said by you in Scripture.

St. Joseph, Son of David, you are the Patron Saint of the dying, families, fathers, expectant mothers, travelers, immigrants, house sellers, craftsman, engineers, and working people. Not a word was said by you in scripture in all you did for our Lord Jesus Christ.

FRANCISCAN FAMILY FOCUS

St. John Joseph of the Cross, OFM, Feast Day, March 5th
(Submitted by Ericka Witover, GOF)

Many of us have heard of the Carmelite St. John of the Cross, but did you know the Franciscan Order has St. John Joseph of the Cross? He was born on the Feast of the Assumption on the Island of Ischia in Southern Italy in 1654 to a family of nobility. Despite this he preferred to dress as the local poor and was a model of virtue. At sixteen years old he was the first Italian to join the Friars of the Alcatarine Reform. He fasted frequently, never drank wine, and slept three hours per night. He was ordained in the Order, much against his will, as in his humility he felt the vocation was better suited to someone more worthy of him, but out of obedience he accepted the call.

Once while praying in a chapel, he was observed to be praying in ecstasy and was levitated far above the floor. (Maybe St. Joseph of Cupertino was interceding for him!) Many healings were obtained at his hands as he practiced great mortifications throughout his life, including being given the grace to not take any drink the last thirty years of his life, in imitation of the thirst of our Lord. He was also gifted with seeing the soul of his departed Mother ascend to Heaven after offering a Mass for her Repose.

As an old man he developed ulcers on his legs which caused great pain while walking, and required the use of a cane. One year he was in the Cathedral for the miracle of the liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius, while among the vast crowd his cane disappeared. In humor St. John replied to a gentleman who asked where his cane was, "Miracle! Miracle." Finally on March 5, 1734, worn out by penance, long nights of prayer and mortification, St. John died at the age of eighty while gazing at a picture of the Blessed Mother. To this day many miracles still occur at his grave in Naples. He was canonized a Saint in 1839 by Pope Gregory XVI.

St. John Joseph of the Cross, Pray for us



“What wonderful majesty! What stupendous
condescension! O sublime humility! That
the Lord of the whole universe, God and the
Son of God, should humble Himself like this
under the form of a little bread, for our
salvation.”

St. Francis of Assisi

ISOLATED TERTIARY SCHEDULE FOR EUCHARISTIC ADORATION

MONDAY:	Judith Inglesby, TOF
TUESDAY:	Linda Denser, TOF
WEDNESDAY:	Luis Guzman, TOF Judith Inglesby, TOF Paul & Mary Tag, TOF
THURSDAY:	Sandy Baden, TOF
FRIDAY:	Linda Denser, TOF Pepe Ventosa, TOF
SATURDAY:	Ericka Witover, TOF
SUNDAY:	Linda Denser, TOF

Please include prayer for the intentions of our Pope, Bishops, and Priests. Also pray for the Community of Friars of the Immaculate Conception Province, for an increase in religious vocations in their Community and for all the intentions of the members of the Isolated Tertiaries Community.

Please contact Pepe Ventosa, TOF if you would like to be added to this Eucharistic schedule.

THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD
FEAST OF ANNUNCIATION MARCH 25TH

Also referred as the Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin Mary is the celebration of the announcement by the Angel Gabriel to Mary that she would conceive and become the mother of Jesus. This event is observed nine full months before Christmas, the birthday of our Lord.

POPE BENEDICT XVI (Marian Thoughts)

THE LORD BE WITH YOU

God, Who became present here on earth, truly dwells in Mary. Mary becomes His tent. What all cultures desire—that God dwell among us—is brought about here.

St. Augustine says: "Before conceiving the Lord in her body she had already conceived Him in her soul." She had made room for the Lord in her soul and thus really became the true Temple where God made Himself incarnate, where He became present on this earth.

Homily, August 15, 2006

THE TENT OF THE LORD

Mary, Mother of the Lord, truly teaches us what entering into communion with Christ is: Mary offered her own flesh, her own blood to Jesus and became a living tent of the Word, allowing herself to be penetrated by His presence in body and spirit.

Let us pray to her, our holy Mother, so that she may help us to open our entire being, always more, to Christ's presence; so that she may help us to follow Him faithfully, day after day, on the streets of our life.

Homily, May 25, 2005

ONGOING FORMATION ZOOM GATHERING MONTHLY SCHEDULE PRESENTATIONS 2023

ONGOING FORMATION ZOOM GATHERING MONTHLY SCHEDULE: 2023 PRESENTATIONS

MONTH	PRESENTATION BY:	TOPIC	ARTICLE
JANUARY	MARY TAG, TOF		ARTICLE 48
FEBRUARY	LINDA MENSER, TOF		ARTICLES 49-52
MARCH	JULIE ELKINTON, TOF		ARTICLE 53
APRIL	VIRGIL DANIEL, TOF		ARTICLES 54 & 55
MAY			
JUNE			
JULY			
AUGUST			
SEPTEMBER			
OCTOBER			
NOVEMBER			
DECEMBER			

Remember, each Presentation should be 10-15 minutes, and then questions to promote discussion. Discussion from each person should be short, around three minutes, so everyone will have a chance to share.

Please contact Linda Menser, TOF if you would like to volunteer for future Presentations.

DID YOU KNOW

Mt. 6:7, “But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.”

We, as Catholics, have prayers that repeat words and phrases when we pray. Is this a bad thing? We pray the Rosary and repeat the Hail Mary, we pray Taize' prayer, especially during Lent, and in the “Little Office of Mary.” If you look at the Scripture verse above the words **vain repetitions**, stand out. What does this mean?

The meaning of vain is empty, nothing, worthless, or to no good purpose. Then if we pray in vain it has no meaning. We are praying then not from the heart. Prayer only has meaning if we are praying from the depth of our soul, in thanksgiving, and in love for our Lord Jesus Christ.

When we pray the Hail Mary in the Rosary we are repeating Scripture as we say: Hail Mary full of grace the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.....the last part of the Rosary: “Pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death,” was added as a result of the Black Plague in the thirteenth century. The most fatal pandemic recorded in human history.

“Hail Mary the Lord is with thee:” the Angel Gabriel’s visit to Mary, “Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb,” Mary’s visit to her cousin, Elizabeth. Together, these passages are the two times Mary is greeted in Chapter 1 of the Gospel of Luke. What a beautiful prayer to honor our Lord’s Mother as we pray. Lastly, in the Rosary we are praying the Holy Gospel with Mary and her Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ. 8

ADMONITION XVIII Compassion for Ones Neighbor Part I



Blessed the man who is patient with his neighbor's shortcomings as he would like him to be if he were in a similar position himself (see Gal. 6:2; Mt. 7:12). Blessed the religious (=Blessed is the servant) who refers (= restores) all the good he has to his Lord and God. He who attributes anything to himself "hides his master's money" (Mt. 25:18) in himself and "even what he thinks he has shall be taken away" (Lk. 8:18).

As we are in the Lenten season, this Admonition is a perfect time for us to reflect upon this reading. Lothar Hardick, OFM mentions several prayers we should pray in our own "struggle with the powers of evil" because of our human nature, as we try, but sometimes fail in our weaknesses and the weaknesses of our neighbor. This reminds me when in Confession the priest said, "You could say a "Hail Mary" every time a wrong word comes out of your mouth even if it is said a hundred times a day. It is a very humbling practice but a good one!

In the context that we are speaking of Lent and of our failures and weaknesses, it is a time we should examine how we deal with the consequences of our sins. Confession is most important and we must prepare to show a sincere contrition for our sins with the examination of our consciences and give thanks for God's mercy.

Our Constitutions of the Franciscan Third Order, Article 61 states: In accordance with the Rule, tertiaries shall receive the sacrament of penance

every month or even oftener, and, when possible they shall have a competent spiritual director. They shall, moreover examine their consciences daily and correct the sins they have committed by truly repenting of them.

Lothar Hardick, OFM mentions we should make a simple prayer of “I cannot,” which reminds me again of Fr. Vit as he suggested we say, “No, My Father won’t let Me. Three times it has come to our attention of just simple prayers to help us guide our way in observing our weaknesses in repentance of our sins: No, My Father Won’t Let Me, a Hail Mary and I Cannot. As said by three different priests, Fr. Vit, Fr. George and Fr. Hardick, simple prayers to help us in our shortcomings.

As Lothar Hardick, OFM says several times, “Blessed the man who is patient with his neighbor’s shortcomings as he would like him to be if he were in a similar position himself,” as stated in this Admonition. Sometimes our own opinions of our neighbor may be taken in a wrong context and we need to stop and reflect in walking in our neighbors shoes before we make wrong conclusions. We or our neighbor, may just be having a bad day and we should be considerate of the fact and just say a simple prayer. Most of what is said in this Admonition by Lothar Hardick, OFM is in regards to living in a Community. As Tertiaries our life is in the world and with our neighbors. We need to be patient with them, with ourselves, and those with which we live.

As we are in Lent, let us be mindful of our weakness and failures and rekindle the love of Christ in our prayer and spiritual sacrifices this lent. Warming our neighbors hearts with a smile and wishing them for a blessed day. Because we are out in the world and not living in a Community we must evangelize, be joyful witnesses to our Lord, emanate the joy of St. Francis and St. Clare, and love our neighbor as ourselves.

XX

HE GAVE THANKS TO GOD

It is useless to persecute someone who is truly striving after virtue. The more they are attacked the more surely they will triumph. To be humbled, it is said, strengthens a generous spirit. (1 CelV)

Save the Date

MARCH 2: IT Zoom Gathering, 7:00 PM Eastern Time, 4:00 PM Pacific Time. You can sign in 15 minutes earlier before the meeting begins. Presentation: Article 53.

MARCH 9: IT Initial Formation Group 2, 7:00 Eastern Time 4:00 PM Pacific Time, Zoom Meeting. You can sign in 15 minutes before the meeting begins.

MARCH 16: IT Initial Formation Group 1, 8:00 Eastern Time, 5:00 PM Pacific Time, Zoom Meeting. You can sign in 15 minutes before the meeting begins.

MARCH 17: St. Patrick's Day

MARCH 20: St. Joseph spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary

MARCH 25: Annunciation of the Lord

