

THEME, SCRIPTURE, REFLECTION, PRAYER, CHALLENGE

DAY 17 GLORY OF DOMESTIC LIFE

*Train the young in the way they should go;
even when old, they will not swerve from it. (Proverbs 22:6)*

To say that St. Joseph is the Glory of Domestic Life is to say that in him we see a supreme example of how a man magnificently transforms home life. There is a certain splendor, even honor in the household when it is properly ordered and guided by the fatherly example of St. Joseph.

For many men, domestic life is a secondary consideration. Most Catholic men understand that they are to work hard to provide the material necessities for their families. However, Catholic men also have the responsibility, together with their wives, to build the domestic Church. The term domestic Church refers to the family as the smallest body of gathered believers in Christ; it is the universal Church in microcosm. It is a home where family life is completely centered on the lordship of Jesus Christ, where parents who are disciples of Jesus, embrace their role as leaders to make disciples of their children. How can a father ensure this if he spends most of his time away from the home? In a word, he can't. It is true that many places of employment are not overly concerned with ample leisure and family time.

Husbands/fathers who are stuck between the proverbial "rock and a hard place" should not feel ashamed; a work-life balance is difficult.

However, as disciples of Christ, we do not operate by mere material and earthly means, but instead rely on grace to perfect nature, and the supernatural to transform the natural. If we follow the model of St. Joseph, we see that we can find a way to blend our work and home life into a single organism, something that moves with and for the rhythms of domestic life.

We must ask ourselves, what sacrifices can we make as husbands and fathers in order to spend more time with our families? Do we really need all that living space? Can we take less expensive vacations? Might our children not do better with less toys, clothes, and entertainment? In most cases, we can find ways to reorient our money, and abstain from costly habits, in order to maximize our resources. If we are honest with ourselves, we can make more and greater sacrifices for the good of our family life and be more generous with God.

St. Joseph, Glory of Domestic Life, you were yourself once faced with the responsibility of providing the necessities of life for Jesus and Mary. Look down with fatherly compassion upon me so that I may have the grace to build the domestic Church in my home and lead my family along the path of discipleship. Pray the [Litany of St. Joseph](#).

Daily Challenge: Ask God how are you doing in allocating your time, activities and resources in forming your family as the domestic Church; discuss with your wife what you heard in prayer. For priests, ask God to show you how you can better equip the families in your parish to live as domestic Church.