

THEME, SCRIPTURE, REFLECTION, PRAYER, CHALLENGE

DAY 24 PROTECTOR OF THE HOLY CHURCH

St. Joseph probably didn't see himself becoming a central character in the history of salvation and being given a title like "Protector of the Holy Church." Yet, because he responded in faith to protect and provide for the Holy Family, the Church teaches that God has called him to protect and provide for the Body of Christ, which is the Church.

In 1870, Pope Leo XIII explained the title of St. Joseph this way, "It is thus fitting and most worthy of Joseph's dignity that, in the same way he once kept unceasing holy watch over the family of Nazareth, so now does he protect and defend with his heavenly patronage the Church of Christ."

This title shows how this simple, just, and good man continues to protect and intercede for us as members of the Church. He was a man of faith and action. Not a single word of his is recorded in all of Scripture, yet his quiet example can inspire us to remain faithful and diligent, working to fulfill our duties in the Church and in our families.

St. Joseph is a wonderful intercessor for priests. The priesthood can be overwhelming given all the pastoral difficulties and challenges. St. Joseph was faced with many difficulties as well. Clearly, he was called to this, and God gave him the grace to do it. God gives that same grace to His priests. Being in a leadership role requires meeting unexpected trials that will test your abilities, but God does not expect you to meet these trials on your own. He wants you to depend on His grace through the intercession of your spiritual father, St. Joseph.

St. Joseph, Protector of the Holy Church, pray for the Holy Father, all bishops, priests, and deacons, that they be renewed in their vocation and humbly and faithfully carry out their mission. Pray for all leaders, that they may have a servant's heart and rely on the wisdom of God in their decision-making. Pray for all lay members of the Church to fulfill their baptismal call to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ into every corner of the world. Pray the [Litany of St. Joseph](#).

Daily Challenge: For priests, identify one pastoral challenge with which you are struggling and bring it to St. Joseph. For those who are not priests, pray for a priest that has been an important part of your (and your family's) faith journey. Pray for him by name, to thank God for his vocation and role in your faith life. Ask St. Joseph and Mary to intercede for all priests for their perseverance and fidelity and the Holy Trinity to confirm them in holiness with all the gifts of the Holy Spirit to sustain them in their call.