

THEME, SCRIPTURE, REFLECTION, PRAYER, CHALLENGE

DAY 28 PATRON OF UNBORN CHILDREN

*Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
before you were born I dedicated you,
a prophet to the nations I appointed you. (Jer 1:5)*

In our times, abortion is often defended in pregnancies arising from irregular situations. Although the circumstance is quite different, St. Joseph too is faced with the most irregular of all pregnancies, a situation leaving him quite unsettled: his wife has conceived by the Holy Spirit! The child is not his biologically or genetically. It is not the fruit of his physical relationship with his wife. In fact, he is called to believe that the child is conceived not by physical relationship with any man, but by the unique and direct intervention of God. How can a man accept such an overwhelming pregnancy? Only by faith. How can he accept fatherhood over such a child that could be called not his own? Only by openness to the will of God, by willingness to do as the angel of the Lord tells him.

We learn from Joseph that fatherhood is much more than simple physical generation. In fact, Joseph, who does not engender any child at all, is the best of fathers and a model for every father. He accepts the life in the womb by honorably taking Mary his wife. He journeys with her to Bethlehem to register the child in the list of humanity. He gives the child a name in the line of David. He defends the child from the cruel attack of Herod.

Joseph was the one chosen for the role of father to the Son of God incarnate in Mary's womb, and he fulfilled this role so faithfully. Within his universal patronage, it is certainly fitting in our times that he be given a new title as "Patron of the Unborn." No one can be a better defender of innocent, helpless life in the womb. No one is a better model of fatherhood to parents of pre-born children. No one can more fittingly aid in the process of healing and reconciliation for those who grieve and agonize over having committed the sin of abortion. No one is a better image for women who have been hurt by men unwilling to accept fatherhood of the child they engendered.

Invoking the intercession of St. Joseph, Patron of the Unborn, let us pray today for all expectant mothers:

O Holy Joseph, protector and provider of the Holy Family and all families, through your intercession may God grant all expectant mothers the grace to cherish the new life within their wombs. May mothers and fathers realize that their baby is a gift from God and have the courage to choose life for their child. Through the Mystery of Baptism may the parents and newborns become children of God and heirs to eternal life in Christ. Amen.

Pray the [Litany of St. Joseph](#).

Daily Challenge: Locate the nearest prolife pregnancy resource center to your home or parish and ask if you might be able to support them in some way. Become familiar with available resources so that you may also defend and protect unborn lives and women in crisis when the occasion arises.