

THEME, SCRIPTURE, REFLECTION, PRAYER, CHALLENGE

DAY 3

SPOUSE OF THE MOTHER OF GOD

On March 19th, the Church celebrates the Solemnity of St. Joseph, but we do so by reference to his being 'the Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary'. In fact, St. Joseph's whole life is defined by his relation to others. He is the earthly father of Jesus, and the husband of Mary. The feast day celebrates his fidelity and courage in fulfilling his obligations to each of them. Where some broadcast their own virtue from the rooftops via social media, St Joseph is more of a "Nike man": he just *does it*. He is a great counter-witness to modern obsessions with autonomy. St. Joseph is the quiet man of action and his actions are oriented to the will of God. Whatever vision he may have had of his life was radically altered that night when the angel appeared to him in a dream:

"Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." (Mt 1:20-21)

After this vision we are told that when Joseph woke up, he did what the angel told him (Mt 1:20-22, 24). Having contemplated a life without Mary, he now sees that being Mary's husband and raising a child, not biologically his own, will be his future. Jesus is the Son of God, and the Second Person of the Trinity; Mary is the Mother of God and the Mother of the Church; and Joseph is remembered in relation to them. Joseph's greatness is to be found in his willingness to let Mary and Jesus be who they should be. Like John the Baptist, he decreases so that they may increase.ⁱ

St. Joseph, pray that I may imitate your selflessness and set aside my own ambitions for the will of God...so that you may increase, and I may decrease.

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

Daily Challenge: Examine how willing you are to put aside your own plans and ambitions and like St. Joseph quietly seek to serve the needs of others first.