



FR. DANIEL'S CORNER

PATRIS CORDE

With a Father's Heart

Our reflection of Pope Francis' document, *Patris Corde*, in this year of St. Joseph continues. This week's entry looks at St. Joseph as an obedient, accepting, and creatively courageous father.

3. An obedient father

God revealed His plan to St. Joseph through dreams, and even when he didn't understand them clearly, he obeyed and did the hard work— such as bringing his family to Egypt to protect Jesus. The Scriptures record angels of God meeting St. Joseph in four dreams to guide him on how best to serve the Holy Family when they were in danger. He immediately followed the instructions to go to Egypt and later returned in order to keep Jesus safe. St. Joseph must have had a deep and intimate relationship with God, which made him never hesitate to obey God's will. Jesus in his humanity must have learned a lot from St. Joseph, especially to be obedient to the Father, which led Him to Calvary.

- Are we fully obedient to the Catholic Church's teachings? If not, what are the areas we need to pray and learn more about?
- How does humility help us be more obedient to God?
- How does obedience help us surmount the difficulties of our life?

4. An accepting father

St. Joseph was able to accept other people for who they were, especially in his acceptance of Mary, even though he was not able to comprehend the whole situation of her pregnancy. He teaches us to hold on to God's promise to His people and entrust everything into God's hands, because he knew God can even make good out of evil. St. Joseph also teaches us how to accept reality with all its hardships and difficulties, and then act and take responsibility. We learn from St. Joseph not to rely on ourselves but instead to ask for God's strength to transform every moment of our life.

- Where in our life are we called to reconcile with our own history and ask for God's healing touch?
- How can we accept and welcome others as they are and help bring them closer to Jesus Christ?
- What are some realizations about ourselves, our relationships with God and with others that we have had during difficult times, such as this time of the pandemic?

5. A creatively courageous father

God's ways are not our ways. Cooperating with divine providence, especially in dealing with difficulties, requires creative courage. When difficulties arise, we can either give up or somehow engage the difficulty. St. Joseph embodies this when he has to be creative to keep Jesus and Mary safe from Herod. God comes to St. Joseph in dreams warning of dangers and places His trust in St. Joseph's ability to keep Jesus and Mary safe. At times we may feel that God is not helping us, but this does not mean that we have been abandoned by God. God is instead trusting us to plan, to be creative and to find solutions ourselves. St. Joseph was always charged with protecting Jesus and Mary. Following his example, we too are charged to protect them through our outreach to those who are poor, needy, suffering and dying.

- Where in our life do we need to trust in God's divine providence to turn a problem into a possibility?
- Read the healing of a paralytic (LK 5:17-26). How can we have a creative faith and bring those who are sick to Jesus Christ?
- How can we show a special love for a particular concern with the least of our brothers and sisters and personally identify with them?