

THE LITANY OF ST. JOSEPH



The litany of St. Joseph, one of only six approved by the Church for public as well as private use, sums up qualities that made him such an important part of the Holy Family (pictured above).

Although he does not appear much in scripture, this "just man" (as he is called in Matthew 1:19), a humble carpenter, served our Lord and the Blessed Virgin Mary faithfully as His "foster-father" and her "chaste guardian," as he is called below.

In referring to St. Joseph as a "diligent protector" of Christ, this litany brings to mind his important role in taking Mary and the infant child Jesus to Egypt to protect our Lord from being killed by King Herod (Matt 3:13-16).

The Litany of St. Joseph, in referring to him as a "patron of the dying" gives one of many examples of his patronage. The faithful ask for his assistance for workers, home buyers (and sellers) and, of course, carpenters, among many others!

When this litany is prayed in public, the congregation responds to a leader with the words in italics.

Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.
Christ, hear us.
Christ, graciously hear us.

God, the Father of Heaven, have mercy on us.
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy on us.
God the Holy Spirit, have mercy on us.
Holy Trinity, One God, have mercy on us.

Holy Mary, pray for us (after each line)
Saint Joseph,
Renowned offspring of David,
Light of Patriarchs,
Spouse of the Mother of God,
Chaste guardian of the Virgin,
Foster-father of the Son of God,
Diligent protector of Christ,
Head of the Holy Family,
Joseph most just,
Joseph most chaste,
Joseph most prudent,
Joseph most strong,
Joseph most obedient,
Joseph most faithful,
Mirror of patience,
Lover of poverty,
Model of artisans,
Glory of home life,
Guardian of virgins,
Pillar of families,
Solace of the wretched, Hope of the sick,
Patron of the dying,
Terror of demons,
Protector of Holy Church,

Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world,
Spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world,
Graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world,
Have mercy on us.

V. He made him the lord of His house:
R. And ruler of all His substance.

Let us pray.

O God, who in Thine unspeakable providence didst vouchsafe to choose blessed Joseph to be the spouse of Thine own most holy Mother: grant, we beseech Thee, that we may deserve to have him for our intercessor in heaven, whom we reverence as our defender on earth: who livest and reignest world without end. Amen.

St. Theresa of Avila once suggested famously that although we may have access to many saints as intercessors for our various needs, we should "go especially to Joseph, for he has great power with God." In praying this litany of St. Joseph we are indeed going to the patron saint and "protector" of the Universal Church!