

The Seven Sundays of Saint Joseph

Second Sunday

Reading:

"Now it came to pass in those days, that a decree went forth from Caesar Augustus that a census of the whole world should be taken... And Joseph also went from Galilee out of the town of Nazareth into Judaea to the town of David, which is called Bethlehem - because he was of the house and family of David - to register, together with Mary his espoused wife, who was with child.

*And it came to pass while they were there, that the days for her to be delivered were fulfilled. And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn."
(Luke 2: 1-7)*

Commentary:

The mystery of the Incarnation is veiled in this humble scene. Joseph contemplates the Child. He loves Jesus so much, and he suffers seeing Him whom He knows is the Word, the King of the universe lying in a manger. He would give Him anything and everything, yet he has nothing to give. The difference between what he would like to do and his poverty of means places his soul in great straits.

But then there comes a moment, perhaps as he holds the Child in his arms, when he grows calm. His sorrow recedes before a great light. He renews his dedication to God once more and carries out perfectly the divine command to love Him with his whole heart, his whole soul and with his whole strength. He gives himself completely to God who lies asleep in his arms. And perhaps the only outward display of his great dedication would be to hug the Child close to his breast, but ever so lightly so as not to wake him.

Monsignor Escriva de Balaguer has written: "There is a great simplicity about His birth. Our Lord comes without any fanfare. No one knows about Him. On earth, only Mary and Joseph share in the divine adventure. And then the shepherds who received the message from the angels. And later on, the wise men from the East. They were the only witnesses of this transcendental event which unites heaven and earth, God and man.... The greatness of this Child who is God! His Father is the God who made heaven and earth and there he is, in a manger, 'because there was no room at the inn' - there was nowhere else for the Lord of all creation." (J. Escriva de Balaguer, "Christ is Passing By", No. 18)

"I can imagine him recollected in prayer, lovingly protecting the Son of God made man who has been entrusted to his paternal care. With the marvelous

*refinement of one who does not live for himself, the holy patriarch spends himself in silent prayer and effective service.... If you want my advice, which I have never tired of repeating these many years, 'Go to Joseph' (Gen. 41: 55). He will show us definite ways, both human and divine, to approach Jesus. As soon as you will dare, as he did, 'to take up in his arms, kiss, clothe and look after' (Prayer to St. Joseph, Roman Missal) this Child-God who has been born unto us. As a homage of their veneration, the Magi offered gold, frankincense and myrrh to Jesus. But Joseph gave his youthful and loving heart."
(Christ is Passing By, No. 38)*

Prayer:

Most blessed patriarch, glorious St. Joseph, chosen to serve as father of the Word made flesh, the sorrow which you felt when you saw the infant Jesus born amid such poverty was suddenly turned into heavenly joy when you heard the song of the angels, and when you saw the glory of that resplendent night.

By this sorrow and this joy, we ask you to obtain for us that, after the course of this life, we may pass onward to hear angelic songs of praise and to rejoice in the splendors of heavenly glory.

Specifically, I ask that.... (mention in silence the favor asked and pray one Our Father, One Hail Mary and one Glory Be).