



## Maronite Monks of Adoration

# MONTH OF ST. JOSEPH

has ever lorded it over vast territories; no group upon whom the great judgments of the world rest, have ever had anything comparable to the task assigned to St. Joseph; the Guardian of the Incarnation of God's Only Begotten Son and the Guardian of His earthly Mother Mary. This was Joseph's assignment.

**G**O TO JOSEPH. You are familiar with this ancient saying from the Old Testament. Now, in this Great Season of Lent, we meet in our Divine Liturgy the *Feast of St. Joseph*, March 19<sup>th</sup> the spiritual, foster father and guardian of Jesus, the Only Begotten Son of the Father in Heaven. In this Sacred Season of Lent it is an especially wonderful time to meet St. Joseph. Mother Church holds up to us now St. Joseph to prepare for the great event — the event of all events, preparing in our souls a contemplative spirit and understanding with the Sainly Joseph preparing us for Holy Week and the Glorious Resurrection of Our Blessed Savior. Mother Church through her Divine Liturgy holds up for us a saint who is silent, quiet, unknown and a seemingly retiring type. At least one who is recorded as having said not a single word whatever in the Sacred Scriptures and leaving us nothing whatever of himself. He came, he did his assigned task and he disappears from Sacred Scripture leaving not a trace.

Yet assigned to him was the greatest task ever accorded a human being after Our Blessed Mother. No king who has reigned; no emperor

Because of this special task as Patriarch of the Holy Family, St. Joseph is the greatest of the patriarchs. In our spiritual readings we have seen from the Sacred Scriptures that St. John the Baptist is the greatest of the prophets. Now we see St. Joseph as the greatest of the patriarchs.

He has been formally declared the Heavenly Patriarch of the Universal Church. As Mary is the Mother of the Church, Joseph is THE Guardian of the Church. So it is that the Sacred Scriptures themselves canonize St. Joseph. Holy Scripture itself tells us that "Joseph was a just man!" He is the greatest of all the saints in Heaven after Mary. Like Mary, and after Mary, his sanctity may be greater than all the saints combined.

Now it is that Mother Church in her liturgy holds out to us for the sacred time before Holy Week and Easter Week, to prepare ourselves and have us meditate upon, St. Joseph. For this Patriarch of Patriarchs, this Guardian of the Universal Church, we are asked to meditate upon and prepare for the coming of the Lord in His Passion and Resurrection. What we meditate upon in St. Joseph is a humble, poor workman, who left

us nothing written or spoken. Who appears in the Sacred Scriptures out of nowhere and disappears from the Sacred Scriptures without notice or comment. Such is God's view of greatness, and such is God's way in dealing with men. And such is what God would have us meditate upon as we prepare for the coming of the Lord: JOSEPH THE SILENT; Joseph the dutiful. The vast majority of mankind, and so of us Christians live and die in obscurity — but not so before the Lord — not so in the Merciful Heart of Jesus who loves us all individually.

All the world in the hoopla of the present era; a hoopla of unfortunate events and their consequences, I would suggest is the best we can do of ourselves. But Mother Church, through her liturgy, holds out to us St. Joseph, the silent, the humble unknown workman, as a model, an exemplar, who is also the greatest of all the patriarchs.

Joseph is the patron of the silent. And with St. Francis de Sales, he is an exemplar of "love's Martyrdom." In this respect also he is THE patron of monks. Says St. Francis de Sales, 'Joseph was a perfect mystic and martyr. Love's mysticism causes love's martyrdom. The sword of love's mystic

would rend his soul and body to immolate himself for the greatest task ever accorded a human being on earth; to be the heavenly appointed guardian and protector of Jesus and Mary; to center and focus his entire existence on Jesus and Mary; to live and to die in and for this cause.'

None of the patriarchs or the prophets of the Old Testament achieved that greatness. None of the Fathers and Doctors of the New Testament rendered or achieved the purity or dignity necessary to fulfill that task of Joseph the Silent, Joseph the Greatest.

Now this is what Mother Church would have us think about this week – in order to fittingly prepare our souls for making present the grace of the Christ's Sacred Passion.

We pray in our Holy Mass:

*"O honorable and righteous Joseph,  
You served the Lord and His Mother,  
You carried in your arms  
the one who carries the world  
You support the One who supports all peoples,  
O mystery of Jacob realized,  
How blessed are you among all the saints."  
O Holy and Glorious Joseph. ✠*

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