

A MANUAL
OF
PRACTICAL DEVOTION
TO THE GLORIOUS PATRIARCH
S T . J O S E P H .

In loving memory of:
PATRICK J. MCMANAMON
*A man truly Catholic
in Faith and practice,
without which it is impossible
to please God.*

K.E. GILLETTE

A MANUAL
OF
PRACTICAL DEVOTION

TO THE GLORIOUS PATRIARCH
S T . J O S E P H .

INCLUDING
THE MASSES, NOVENAS, LITANIES, AND OTHER PIOUS
EXERCISES FOR THE FEASTS
OF THE
HOLY SPOUSE OF THE B. V. MARY.

With Notices for those Pious Practices,

DEDUCED FROM
THE EXAMPLES OF OUR BLESSED REDEEMER, THE BLESSED
VIRGIN MARY, THE HOLY ANGELS, THE MOST
EMINENT SAINTS AND DOCTORS
OF THE CHURCH.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN OF
FATHER PATRIGNANI, S.J.

Revised by a Member of the Society of Jesus.

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CONTENTS.



	Page
Preface	xi
Work of St. Joseph	xvii

FIRST BOOK.

I.—First Motive for Devotion to St. Joseph: the Example of Jesus Christ	1
II.—Second Motive: the Example of the Blessed Virgin	11
III.—Third Motive: the Example of the Holy Angels	19
IV.—Fourth Motive: the Example of the Church .	30
V.—Fifth Motive: the Devotion to St. Joseph is a source of Benedictions to the entire Universe	37
VI.—Sixth Motive: St. Joseph is a powerful beneficent Patron to all Christians .	43
VII.—Seventh Motive: it is the interest of persons in every condition and state of life to choose St. Joseph as their Special Patron .	46
VIII.—Eighth Motive: the Example of Religious Orders	55
IX.—Ninth Motive: the Example of Princes, Kingdoms, and Cities	60
X.—Tenth Motive: the Example of many Holy Authors	68
XI.—Eleventh Motive: the Example of many Persons eminently Holy	76
XII.—Twelfth Motive: St. Joseph is the Special Patron of the Agonizing and of a Happy Death	94

CONTENTS.

SECOND BOOK.

	Page
I.—Protection of St. Joseph, as experienced by St. Theresa and the Order of Mount Carmel	106
II.—Protection of St. Joseph over Religious Houses	113
III.—St. Joseph, the particular Patron of those who aspire to great interior Sanctity	115
IV.—St. Joseph's Paternal Vigilance over those amongst his Clients whose Salvation is in danger	120
V.—St. Joseph is not unmindful of the Temporal Wants of his Clients	125
VI.—St. Joseph, the Protector and Guide of Travel- lers	135
VII.—St. Joseph, the Protector of his Servants at the awful hour of Death	143
VIII.—St. Joseph's Protection in various Necessities, both Spiritual and Temporal	149
IX.—Pilgrimages in honour of St. Joseph	167
St. Joseph-of-the-Fields	168
St. Joseph-of-the-Oak	170

THIRD BOOK.

I.—Practices for each day	177
II.—Practices for different periods of the year	189
A Novena preparatory to the Feast of St. Joseph	190
Triduum in honour of St. Joseph	220
Feast of St. Joseph—19th March	224
Feast of the Espousals of St. Joseph—23rd January	232
Feast of the Patronage of St. Joseph—third Sunday after Easter	233
Feast of St. Joseph of Chêne—24th August	242

CONTENTS.

	Page
III.—Confraternities and Associations in honour of	
St. Joseph	247
Confraternity of the Bona Mors	248
Confraternity of St. Joseph	263
Association of Perpetual Devotion to St. Joseph	264
IV.—Manner of Sanctifying the month of March, and of extending the Devotion to St. Joseph	266
V.—Prayers and Hymns to St. Joseph	278
Prayers to St. Joseph	279
Prayers to the Sacred Heart	289
Prayers to Mary	301
Spiritual Exercises during Mass	307
Acts before Communion	314
Acts after Communion	317
Hymns to St. Joseph	320

PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH.



HOLY ST. JOSEPH ! hear thy suppliant's prayer,
And take me to thy own paternal care ;
For thou whom God selected on this earth
To watch the infant Jesus at His birth,
And guard the Virgin Mother of the Child—
The ever-blessed Mary, undefiled—
O thou to whom such wondrous charge was given,
Must surely now be powerful in heaven !
Be, then, dear Father to my Jesus, be
A father and protector unto me ;
Beseech of Jesus that I may obtain
What none through thee have ever sought in vain—
The love of Jesus, with a heart sincere,
Free from the selfishness of hope or fear ;
Thus, for God's glory, that I may adore
Jesus, my Saviour, now and evermore.
And thou, O Mary ! ever "Blessed," styled,
The Virgin Mother of the Saviour Child,
With Holy Joseph, take me to thy care,
For, thus protected, God *will* hear my prayer !

Amen.

P R E F A C E .

ANXIOUS to promote the pious intentions of the author of this work—F. ANTONY-JOSEPH PATRIGNANI, S.J.—we venture to present the public with a translation.

His earnest desire, to use his own expression, was to diffuse more widely the “Devotion to St. Joseph,” to re-animate the piety of his devoted children, and, if possible, to induce all hearts to love and venerate him as he deserves.

And does not this great saint, whom God has so eminently distinguished, deserve, in a special manner, the homage of our devotion, respect, and affection? A great many authors and preachers have used their best

exertions to exalt by eloquent panegyrics the prerogatives and virtues of St. Joseph, and they have succeeded in rallying around him a multitude of clients, who invoke him as their advocate and spiritual father, and as the dearest object of their love and confidence, after Jesus and Mary. We, in our humble sphere, are now endeavouring to attain the same end, but by a shorter and more easy method, which was adopted in preference by F. Patrignani.

Example, it is unnecessary to say, has far greater influence over the heart and mind, than the most convincing arguments: the latter only gain our approval of what is right, but the former leads us to put it in practice. The examples to be met with in this work are of two kinds, and naturally divide the subject-matter into two parts. The first part exhibits the many interior and exterior practices of devotion in use among St.

Joseph's clients, supplying so many motives for their devotion to him. The second will present to our view numerous instances of the graces and favours which have been granted to St. Joseph's devoted clients. A third part will contain various practices in his honour, and several ways of spreading this devotion.

Patrignani wrote his book in 1709; since his time, the devotion to St. Joseph has undergone many changes in its exterior form. To be content, in a new edition, with presenting the reader with the devotions which were in use then, without giving likewise those which have been adopted since, would be justly to expose ourselves to the reproach of being unpractical. It will easily be understood, then, that some alterations were necessary; but, in permitting these, we have retained, as far as possible, the original text of our author;

and we have generally used notes to explain or enlarge what appeared to us incomplete or incorrect. For several years the Feasts of Saint Joseph have been multiplying ; new Pilgrimages and Associations are continually being formed—unequivocal signs of the veneration in which this holy patriarch is held, and, perhaps we may say, of the fruit which this work has produced. We have thought that a short notice of these foundations would not be misplaced ; we have, therefore, placed them at the end of the second book. In the third, to the practices already found there, we have added those peculiar to the new Associations, or to the recently founded Pilgrimages. We have, therefore, united in one work, the motives for honouring St. Joseph, and the numerous ways of doing so. But, since the servants of Joseph are also those of Jesus and Mary, we have added

some prayers and hymns to the Sacred Heart and to the Immaculate Conception, which will help to satisfy their devotion.

It now remains for us to offer this work, with our pious author, to the great Saint who is the object of it, praying him to supply for its defects, and to accept the desire we have to increase his honour, to make him loved by all hearts, and to see him invoked with confidence by all in trouble.

PUBLISHER'S NOTES

In his Apostolic Constitution entitled *The Doctrine of Indulgences* published on January 1, 1967, Pope Paul VI promulgated new norms regarding indulgences.

Two points of his Apostolic Constitution should be mentioned here:

1. Contrary to the former regulations, all indulgences, whether *partial* or *plenary*, can now be applied to the faithful departed.
2. With regard to *partial* indulgences, their measurement by days and years has been abolished.

Complete information on the new norms is available in the new *Enchiridion of Indulgences*.

A good summary of the new norms, including lists of the indulgenced prayers and good works, is found in the booklet entitled *New Regulations on Indulgences*, available from TAN Books and Publishers, Inc.

* * *

Some of the associations mentioned in this book are no longer active in the United States. However, those wishing to join or receive information on the Pious Union of St. Joseph may write to the address given below, enclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

The Pious Union in Honor of St. Joseph, a crusade of prayer for the dying, was founded by Blessed Father Aloysius (Louis) Guanella (d. 1915) at the Church of St. Joseph's Death in Rome, and made an Archconfraternity by Pope St. Pius X. A similar association begun by Father Hugolinus Storff, a Franciscan in the Mid-West, was canonically erected at St. Peter's Church, Chicago, in 1930 and affiliated with the Archconfraternity. It is not a Purgatorial Society; only the living can enroll.

Pious Union of St. Joseph
St. Peter's Church in-the-Loop
110 W. Madison Street
Chicago, Illinois 60602

WORK OF ST. JOSEPH.

Object of this Work.

THE object of the Work of St. Joseph, is the honour of this great Saint, the increase of devotion to him, and the imitation of his virtues.

To honour St. Joseph is to glorify God in one of His most excellent works—it is to discharge the debt of gratitude we owe to him for the services he rendered to our Divine Saviour and His holy Mother—it is to imitate them and to conform ourselves to the wishes of our dear Lord and the Blessed Virgin, who cannot but be pleased at the homage rendered to a Saint so devoted to them—it is further to correspond to the will of God, who, by the abundance of graces granted to the intercession of St. Joseph, seems, together with the devotion to the Sacred Heart and the Immaculate Conception, to recommend it to our special devotion and confidence. To honour this great Saint is to provide ourselves with a powerful protector during life and at the hour of death.

To spread devotion to the holy patriarch, and the imitation of his virtues, give us a special claim to his

affection. By this means we contribute to the spiritual welfare of our brethren, by giving them, in the humble and submissive life of the poor artizan, a preservative against the spirit of the age; and in his powerful intercession and the paternal goodness of his heart, a generous and powerful friend.

Means to employ for this Work.

Our aim is clearly defined as to means: the association trusting principally in the zeal of its members, we will confine ourselves to the following remarks:—

To spread devotion to St. Joseph, the associates should, above all things, endeavour to make the holy patriarch known. In the virtues suggested, they should consider the wants of the persons they address. Regarding the honours to pay him, although in private they be free to follow their own devotion, in the public exercises they should choose in preference what is suitable to the associates in general. The association is composed of persons whose education, habits, and necessities may differ very much; to exact a uniformity in the exercises, would often render them useless, or at least lessen the benefit. Among the different members forming an association, we find the following practices: Some bind themselves each day to certain prayers, to certain acts of charity, or any other virtue, in honour of St. Joseph;

others honour in an especial manner the Seven Sorrows and the Seven Joys of the holy patriarch, by exercises which are appropriate to them. There are associations where each member engages himself to pay him particular honour during one day of the week, month, or year, in the name of all the members; often the associates consecrate particularly Wednesday to the devotion of St. Joseph, and perform different exercises in his honour.

All these practices in honouring St. Joseph have reference to our end. Let those persons who have adopted them add some exercises likely to extend the devotion to the holy patriarch, and the imitation of his virtues; they can do so perfectly well: and still forming part of their association, can become members of the Work of St. Joseph. The greater part of these practices having been published in the "Devotions to St. Joseph," we refer to that work. As to the last of these practices, the approbation given and the results promised oblige us to pause to make known the Association of Wednesday, formed among the different reunions which have adopted it.

Association of Wednesday.

This practice consists in offering this day to God for the extension of the devotion to St. Joseph, and for the spiritual good of the members of the Work, who make this offering for the same intention. Thus,

among the associates of Wednesday, a holy intimacy is formed. Already united for the same end—the glory of St. Joseph—they unite themselves again to obtain the most powerful of means, that of the grace which, in sanctifying themselves, renders their labours beneficial. Charity is the soul of this association ; it is the only endowment required from the members. To become a member, the dedication of Wednesday to St. Joseph is necessary ; but that suffices. Persons who can do nothing more can beg for the blessings of heaven upon the association, by the merit of their actions and ordinary employments. Those who have it in their power may employ themselves, or others, for the glory of St. Joseph, and add some spiritual exercises for the same object. These exercises are at the choice of the associates and the discretion of the director of each reunion. This important point understood, the following remarks will serve as a guide in the choice to be made.

Exercises in use in the Reunions of Wednesday.

In Angers, Vetré, and Villedieu, and in all the places where the associates have the free disposal of their time, they assemble on Wednesday to assist at the holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The priest, before going up to the altar, recommends the intentions which have been addressed to him to the assistants, and recites after Mass the prayer of the association.

At the end of an exhortation, which takes place every fortnight, the associates concert together on the manner of extending and supporting the Work ; each one makes known the result of his efforts, and the aid which he can afford to its progress.

In some parishes, although the consecration of the Wednesday is inviolably maintained, the meeting is deferred to the Sunday evening, to accommodate those who are occupied the other days of the week. Young persons find in these Meetings, attended, as they are, by religious and other devout persons, a preservative against the dangers of the world.

In communities or schools where the consecration of the Wednesday is introduced, if it be not general, those who adopt it may confine themselves to the consecration of the day and some works of piety. If it be adopted by the whole house, superiors may give practices in accordance with the circumstances. Generally, hymns are joined to the exercises noted above. And since the members of the Work of St. Joseph are pre-eminently disciples of Jesus, and children of Mary, they love their meetings to combine with the praises of the holy patriarch those of the Sacred Heart and of the Immaculate Conception. The first hymn, at the commencement of the Mass, is generally to St. Joseph ; the second, at the elevation, to our Lord ; the third, after the communion, to the Blessed Virgin. The same idea, in the selection of the hymns, is carried out in the monthly

meetings of St. Joseph, and when benediction is substituted for the holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

The members of the association are particularly recommended to offer the first Wednesday in the month for deceased members. Those among the members who assist at the holy Mass on that day, offer it for that intention; those who have not that happiness, make at least an offering of the merits of our Saviour in their favour. (*See the Prayers to the Sacred Heart*).

The practice of consecrating the Wednesday is compatible with every rule and every employment. In conforming to the principal requirement, the exterior form may be modified according to circumstances. The associates, besides, do not *contract any engagements*; they have only, after joining the association, to persevere in the offering of the Wednesday. Furthermore, it is to be remarked, that to be a member of the Work of St. Joseph, it is not even absolutely necessary to make the consecration of the Wednesday. Without doubt, it is very advantageous; those who do it derive great help from it during their life, and after death; but as the aim of the Work of St. Joseph is simply to honour our holy patron, and to spread the devotion to him, any person who, without wishing to bind himself to any particular practice, engages to work for the same end, can be admitted as a member. The persons who direct each reunion, inscribe the name, surname,

and address of the associates in a register. The list, in detail, of each reunion ought to be forwarded to Angers, to P. N. Louis, Director of the Work, where every information concerning the association may be had.

Prayer of the Associates.

This prayer is said on Wednesday, in private or at the reunion. An indulgence of forty days for the dioceses of Angers, Tours, Rennes, Beauvais, Poitiers, and Nantes.

“O Joseph! who by your fidelity to the inspirations of heaven, merited, in the midst of hard labour, the contempt of the world and the trials of this life, to receive from the Holy Ghost the title of Just, and from God the Father the care of Jesus, His Divine Son, and Mary, the Queen of virgins; we implore of you, now that you are all-powerful with God, to remember us, who still languish in this valley of tears, exposed to the snares of cruel enemies. Obtain for us a contempt for the false goods of this world, victory over our passions, an unbounded zeal in the service of God, a tender confidence in Jesus, your adopted Son, and in Mary, your spouse. O Joseph! be our guide, our patron, our defender at the hour of death. We beg this of you, by the love which you bear to Jesus and Mary. We beseech you to ask the same graces for all those who have associated

themselves to us to spread devotion to you. Listen to their prayers, assist their efforts, and obtain, in reward of their zeal, that they may one day be united around your throne at the feet of Jesus and Mary. Amen.

“ Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us.

“ Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us.

“ St. Joseph, pray for us.”

At the end of this prayer, a Pater and Ave are added for the different intentions of the associates present at the reunion.

MANUAL OF DEVOTION
TO
The Glorious Patriarch
SAINT JOSEPH.

FIRST PART.

MOTIVES FOR THE DEVOTION TO ST. JOSEPH.

CHAPTER I.

First Motive for Devotion to St. Joseph—the Example of Jesus Christ.

WHEN from His cross Jesus Christ addressed Himself to the ever-blessed Virgin His mother, and, pointing to St. John, said to her, “Woman, behold thy son,” undoubtedly He intended to put us all under her protection in the person of that beloved disciple, who then represented the entire body of the elect (*St. Bern. S.*). In like manner, it is most natural to suppose that the Eternal Father, in appointing St. Joseph, as head of the Holy Family, to be the guardian of the lives of Jesus and Mary in their flight into Egypt, wished at the same time to place all mankind under his protection, and to inspire them with respect and veneration for a saint, to

whose hands was entrusted the most precious treasure that either Heaven or Earth ever contained, the "Saviour of the world," the "Incarnate Word," the source and centre of the bliss of Paradise. This one motive should in itself be sufficient to inspire us with a particular devotion to St. Joseph; but we have a stronger one still in the example given to us by the Son of the Most High.

The entire life of our Blessed Saviour is a perfect model, or rather we should say a divine model prepared for our imitation. He says Himself: "Behold, I have given you an example, that, as I have done, you also may do" (*John*, xiii.). Let us now see what honour He paid to St. Joseph, that we may imitate Him in that respect. Jesus is the first of all men who honoured St. Joseph; He saw in this holy patriarch the representative of the Eternal Father, who had placed him over Him in this world, so He treated him in every respect as a father; and it would not have been possible for Him to have shown him more filial respect, had he really been His father.

Already, Christian reader, I flatter myself I can read in your heart the pious and eager desire of becoming acquainted with all the particulars of that example of filial piety which Jesus Christ gave us during the life of St. Joseph; but how can you expect to be able to penetrate a mystery concerning which the Holy Ghost has preserved a profound silence? Yes, the Holy Ghost has covered it with an impenetrable veil, since St. Luke, the depository of the secrets of the "Word made flesh," and the privileged historian of the mysteries of His divine childhood, on coming to the recital of the incidents

in the life of the Son of God, from His twelfth until His thirtieth year, embodies them all in these words: "He was subject to them."—"Erat subditus illis." What a mystery! Were eighteen years of the mortal life of the Son of God spent by Him without exhibiting anything great or wonderful, which might serve for our instruction? Such an assertion would be impious. Was the evangelist ignorant of the particulars of the hidden life of our Divine Lord at Nazareth? Rather, was it not (so to speak) in the school of the Blessed Virgin that the sacred penman learned everything that he had to relate? Was it not from Mary herself that he learned even the most minute details of the birth of our Redeemer in a stable, the adoration of the shepherds, the canticle of the angels, and many other particulars relating to the mystery of the "Incarnation," so that St. Luke is called by some writers "the Blessed Virgin's secretary"? If, then, so faithful and accurate an historian as St. Luke has reduced the narrative of the greater part of our Saviour's life to these few words, "He was subject to them," we must conclude, that so perfectly did Jesus Christ devote Himself to the practice of obedience, obedience to Mary and Joseph, that although during that long period He performed an infinite number of heroic acts of piety, humility, patience, zeal, and the most exalted virtues, He seems nevertheless to have had no other occupation than that of doing the will of others; this occupation alone, He would have recorded of Himself in the Gospel as being the most noble, the most glorious, and the most worthy of the Word Incarnate.

But this subjection, this obedience of Jesus Christ, presupposes that the person whose orders He obeyed,

must have been invested with the right of authority; and hence, in the words of the Sacred Text which we have quoted, do we not find an epitome of the life of the Son of God, and, at the same time, of that of the great St. Joseph? What, therefore, was St. Joseph's occupation during the eighteen years that he lived with Jesus at Nazareth? It was, if we may imitate the brief Gospel phrase, that of "commanding Jesus," a right to which, in the order of a mysterious Providence, he was fully entitled, as being the constituted head and ruler of the "Holy Family." Doubtless, Mary also, as being His mother, had the privilege of commanding Him; but as a father's authority is considered paramount to all others, Jesus rendered to Joseph, in a special manner, the duty of obedience. These are the sentiments of two celebrated theologians, St. Thomas and Pierre d'Ailly. May I be permitted here to address myself thus to the blessed spirits? How often have you not been penetrated with admiration and astonishment, on beholding Jesus deny Himself the liberty of making the slightest movement, speaking a single word, taking rest or nourishment, but in accordance with the precise directions which He received from St. Joseph! But say, ye blessed spirits, what most excited your astonishment? Was it the humiliation of Jesus in obeying St. Joseph, or was it the exalted dignity of St. Joseph's office in commanding Jesus? The just man Noah, when he saw the Ark resting on the mountains of Armenia, required no aid of science in order to appreciate the prodigious weight of the waters of the Deluge: in like manner, Gerson, that devout servant of St. Joseph, discovers in the profound humiliation of Jesus obeying Joseph, the just

measure of our saint's exaltation—the one ascends in proportion as the other descends; so that, if the subjection of Jesus attests His incomprehensible humility, it no less proves the incomparable dignity of Joseph; and all the acts of submission performed by the Son of God in obeying St. Joseph, are to the latter so many steps of sublime elevation. When we consider all this, how can we ever sufficiently comprehend the sublime dignity of a saint who thus beheld himself obeyed, respected, and served during so many years by his Creator and his God? Joshua excited the admiration of all succeeding generations for having once miraculously delayed the setting of the Sun, which at his command actually remained stationary. But how insignificant was the power of that famous general when compared with that of St. Joseph, who, not once, but a thousand times, could either set in motion or set at rest, as he pleased, God Himself, the Creator of the Sun and of all Nature! Great in Egypt, indeed, was the power of that other Joseph, to whom the king confided the entire government of his empire. Moses could not have been honoured with a more glorious title than that with which the God of armies invested him, when He called him the “God of Pharaoh;” but these titles, these privileges, admirable as they are, vanish altogether before the prerogatives of a saint to whom the King of kings subjected Himself as to His Father and His Lord.

And, doubtless, it is as impossible to find amongst the multitude of saints one greater than St. Joseph, as it is to conceive an authority greater than that which he enjoyed, in virtue of the right which he had of commanding the Son of God. Let us for a moment imagine a personage who has been appointed

king over all the kings of the Earth; suppose, also, that God created ten thousand worlds, that He gives to each its king on condition that all these kings should acknowledge as their sovereign one absolute monarch. Imagine the glory of such a monarch, receiving the homages of ten thousand great princes; the sublimity of that throne elevated above so many thrones; but yet such a monarch would not be so highly honoured in receiving allegiance from this nation of kings, as was St. Joseph by the perfect submission and obedience which was rendered to him by the Son of God. It was mere boasting on the part of Hippocrates, that ancient warrior, in order to flatter his soldiers, and add to his own importance, when he said, that an honour more precious to him than an empire was the privilege of commanding those who were themselves in authority. St. Joseph, on the contrary, could say with truth: To me alone belongs the glory of commanding Almighty God, on whom all creatures depend, to whom all princes must respectfully submit, and before whom the pillars of Heaven tremble (*Job*, ix.).

But if the glory of those who exercise authority over others, consists less in having the power of commanding than in seeing their orders obeyed with zeal and submission, it follows, that what chiefly constituted St. Joseph's glory, was not so much the parental authority with which he was invested, as the perfect obedience of Jesus to his commands. Ye devout clients of St. Joseph, I shall now endeavour to gratify your piety by entering still further into detail, and I shall cite for you a few instances of that obedience which the Son of God practised in the "House of Nazareth," with as much simplicity as

if He were quite incapable of acting for Himself. It is true, as I have already stated, that St. Luke has embodied the events of eighteen years of our Saviour's life in these mysterious words, "He was subject to them;" this, however, may not interfere with a fuller development of the meaning of these words, calling in for this purpose the comments of the Holy Fathers. St. Basil (in the fortieth chapter of his Monastic Constitutions) states, that our Saviour toiled without ceasing in obedience to Mary and Joseph. St. Justin the Martyr (in his Dialogue with Tryphon) assures us that the "Word Incarnate" assisted St. Joseph in his workshop, and laboured at his trade as assiduously as His strength would permit. St. Jerom and St. Bonaventure make a similar statement. But the most irrefragable testimony to this continual exercise of obedience on the part of Jesus to the least wish of St. Joseph, is that which the Blessed Virgin herself gave to St. Bridget, the confidant of her most intimate secrets. These are her words: "So obedient was my Son, that if Joseph said to Him, Do this or that, He instantly did it" (*Rev. of St. Bridget*, b. iv. c. 58).

Whence I behold Joseph and Jesus, one exercising the parental authority by giving his orders, and the other performing the duties of dependence and filial piety by the perfection of obedience. It was necessary that Joseph, in order to maintain a God reduced to a state of poverty, should apply himself to the trade of a carpenter. I hear him saying to Jesus, his adopted son, in the most respectful terms: "Jesus, come and assist me to saw this plank, to carve this block; Jesus, take the hammer and drive in that nail; come and collect this sawdust, and these

shavings, and arrange the wood in order. . . . Jesus, take fuel to your mother," &c. &c. The "light" was less prompt in issuing forth from nothing at the command of its Creator, than was Jesus in hearing and quickly executing the orders He received. Hence, it is not surprising that the inhabitants of Nazareth should have looked upon Him as the true son of Joseph. What made them fall into this error, at first innocent, was seeing Him so submissive to this poor artizan. "They said: Is not this the carpenter's son?"

And again, contemplate, with Gerson, this King of Glory, this God of Majesty, who receives the profound homage of millions of angels: behold Him now, not only a partner in trade with Joseph, but also acting as a servant to Mary, in His lowly home at Nazareth; see how He lays wood on the fire, goes to fetch water at the neighbouring fountain, prepares the frugal repast, and takes part in the most humble and laborious offices of the house. How is it possible that Joseph, on witnessing such unparalleled humility and obedience, was not overwhelmed beyond the power of endurance with mingled feelings of confusion and rapture? Tobias fell prostrate on the earth, awe-stricken and beside himself, when the angel Raphael, who, under the form of a young man, had served him as a guide, revealed to him the secret of his angelic nature. But had not Joseph, who was so deeply impressed with a sense of the awful majesty and adorable attributes of Jesus, his adopted son, far greater reason to feel profoundly humbled, when he beheld a God made man assume the form of a child, and render to him all those menial services which

only a child, or even the lowest servant, would be expected to perform for him?

Oh! tell us, blessed and happy saint, how often, penetrated with the most lively sentiments of respect and humility, you have said to this amiable child, when you beheld Him exhausted and panting from over-exertion and fatigue: "O Jesus! my son, you know what happiness it would afford me, could I have the privilege of obeying rather than that of commanding you. I humbly reverence your obedience; and my authority over you affords me satisfaction only inasmuch as it has pleased you to give to the world the glorious example of the Creator obeying His creature. If you will permit, O my God! we shall exchange places, and you will command as master of this house." But, in order to console Joseph, Jesus may doubtless have said to him what He afterwards said to St. John the Baptist: "Be resigned, cherished guardian of my childhood; be resigned, and refuse not the honour which I render to you: it is fitting that you fulfil in my regard the duty of a father, and that I be subject to you as an obedient and respectful son: it is thus that we shall give to the world an example of all justice."

And is it not reasonable to suppose that, if in this mysterious subjection of our amiable Redeemer to St. Joseph, Origen points out a beautiful lesson on the respect and obedience which children owe to their parents, we may also add, that our Blessed Saviour, by honouring St. Joseph as His father, intended to leave a signal example to His great family, the Church, of the veneration which, in a special manner, it owes to the head of the "Holy Family." Had Jesus Christ passed only one hour submissive to the

commands of Joseph, that circumstance alone would have been sufficient to render this holy patriarch of the New Law more venerable than all the saints; how much more so, when Jesus has been pleased to live so long under his directions? Educated and provided with all the necessaries of life by St. Joseph, during five-and-twenty or thirty years, is it not natural that Jesus Christ should desire that all Christians might repay him in some degree, by their fervent and respectful homage, for the long and faithful services which this good father rendered to His adorable person?

Jesus Christ one day declared His wishes on this subject to St. Margaret of Cortona, in an apparition, in which, among other things, He recommended her to be specially devoted to St. Joseph, for the sake of the gratitude which He felt towards him, for having provided for His earthly wants with so much zeal and affection.

Those Christians should reproach themselves with unpardonable ingratitude, who neglect paying a tribute of honour and devotion to St. Joseph for the love of a God-Saviour. As for me, O my Jesus! I will follow Thy example; I will serve those whom Thou hast served; I will honour those whom Thou hast honoured; I will love those whom Thou hast loved with the tenderness of a son. O my sweet Jesus! by that profound humility which made Thee obedient to the smallest wish of St. Joseph, I supplicate Thee to grant to me, Thy unworthy servant, grace to devote myself from this moment for ever to the service of this great saint, in order to please Thee, since Thou Thyself hast given the first example of a tender devotion to him.