



Reflection 6

FOLLOWING CLELIA'S FOOTSTEPS
TOWARD THE HEART OF JESUS

Saint Joseph, a wise man to whom we entrust our lives

Saint Joseph was a wise man to whom we can turn and entrust ourselves in our daily lives: “In life, in work, in the family, in moments of joy and of sorrow, Saint Joseph constantly sought out and loved the Lord, deserving the praise of Scripture as a just and wise man. May you always invoke him, especially in the difficult moments you may encounter.” (*Pope Francis, General Audience, March 17, 2021*)

Saint Joseph is often considered to be on the sidelines, nearly silent, but that is not true. The foster father of Jesus is truly meek, but capable of accepting with great faith and courage the divine plan for his life and for his family. This is Saint Joseph, a creative laborer, able to love his family without doubt or reservation. He is a man who listens, capable of great love, to the extent that Jesus himself refers to him as a beloved father, a father of tenderness, obedience, and acceptance. For this is the great strength of the father of the Holy Family, the ability to accept and open his heart to undisputable love

Matthew 11:25-30 - At that time Jesus said in reply, “I give praise to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike. Yes, Father, such has been your gracious will. All things

have been handed over to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him. Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light.”

Pope Francis - True wisdom also comes from the heart. It is not only a matter of understanding ideas: true wisdom also enters the heart. And if you know many things but have a closed heart, you are not wise. Jesus tells them that his Father’s mysteries are revealed to the “little ones”, to those who confidently open themselves to his Word of salvation, who open their heart to the Word of salvation, who feel the need for him and await everything from him. The heart that is open and trustful towards the Lord.

Jesus explains that he has received everything from the Father, and calls him “my Father”, to affirm the unique nature of his relationship with him. Indeed, only between the Son and the Father is there total reciprocity: each one knows the other, each one lives in the other. But this unique communion is like a flower that blossoms to freely reveal its beauty and its goodness. And here then is Jesus’ invitation: “Come to me...” (v. 28). He wishes to give what he receives from the Father. He wants to give us Truth, and Jesus’ Truth is always free: it is a gift, it is the Holy Spirit, the Truth.

And then, Jesus says that if we go to him, we will find rest. The “rest” that Christ offers to the weary and oppressed is not merely psychological solace or donated charity, but the joy of the poor who are evangelized and are builders of the new humanity: this is solace. Joy. The joy that Jesus gives us. It is unique.

May, the humblest and highest of creatures, implore from God *wisdom of heart* for us, so that we may discern his signs in our lives and be participants in those mysteries which, hidden from the proud, are revealed to the humble. (*Angelus, July 5, 2020*)

THE FAMILY

Each Christian family can first of all — as Mary and Joseph did — welcome Jesus, listen to Him, speak with Him, guard Him, protect Him, grow with Him; and in this way improve the world. Let us make room in our heart and in our day for the Lord. As Mary and Joseph also did, and it was not easy: how many difficulties they had to overcome! They were not a superficial family, they were not an unreal family. The family of Nazareth urges us to rediscover the vocation and mission of the family, of every family. And, what happened in those 30 years in Nazareth, can thus happen to us too: in seeking to make love and not hate normal, making mutual help commonplace, not indifference or enmity. . . . And this is the great mission of the family: to make room for Jesus who is coming, to welcome Jesus in the family, in each member: children, husband, wife, grandparents.... Jesus is there. Welcome him there, in order that He grow spiritually in the family. *(General Audience, December 17, 2014)*

Like Joseph

The first need, then, is precisely this: that a father be *present* in the family. That he be close to his wife, to share everything, joy and sorrow, hope and hardship. And that he be close to his children as they grow: when they play and when they strive, when they are carefree and when they are distressed, when they are talkative and when they are silent, when they are daring and when they are afraid, when they take a wrong step and when they find their path again; a father who is always present. To say “present” is not to say “controlling”! Fathers who are too controlling cancel out their children, they don't let them develop. *(General Audience, February 4, 2015)*

Mother Clelia

“Why are you so worried about things that have no substance? ‘Think of me,’ Jesus tells us, ‘and I will look after you and everything that

concerns you.' What more do you want? Abandon yourself totally to God and He will lead you wherever He wants. Knowing that He is leading you, you should remain peacefully in His hands. The less you worry and get upset, the more you will avoid certain pitfalls. Impulses of grace should never be questioned." (*Spiritual Anthology*, p. 288)

Prayer

O God, Father of all, you desired to entrust your Son into the hands of Joseph, a human being like us. Help us to be like him: just in carrying out your will, prudent in word and action, strong in facing life, temperant in satisfying our needs. Increase our faith in You, our hope that Salvation will be ours even in the most ordinary events of life, and our love for You and for those who live with us. Amen.

PLEDGE

Jesus is the light that illumines my heart and makes it wise. I want to live each moment of my day listening to the voice of Jesus who speaks to my heart because he loves me.

The Holy Spirit will show me the way. I must have the courage to do good, to change my heart and mind, and to let wisdom and the will of God lead me.

Be wise like Saint Joseph, ready to comprehend the Gospel and put it into practice. (Pope Francis)

