

Cloak Novena (see page 245). Novenas are normally nine days long, but the Holy Cloak Novena consists of 30 days of prayer in honor of the 30 years St. Joseph lived with Jesus. The Holy Cloak Novena is considered one of the most efficacious novenas in the treasury of the Church.

Place yourself under the paternal cloak of St. Joseph. Open your heart to the spiritual fatherhood of St. Joseph and experience the love of the best of fathers.

It is natural and worthy that as the Blessed Joseph ministered to all the needs of the family of Nazareth and girt it about with his protection, he should now cover with the cloak of his heavenly patronage and defend the Church of Jesus Christ.¹³

— Pope Leo XIII

Glorious St. Joseph, spouse of the Virgin Mary, we beseech you through the heart of Jesus Christ, grant to us your fatherly protection.¹⁴

— St. Francis de Sales

Itē ad Ioseph!

If you wish to be close to Christ, we again today repeat, “Go to Joseph.”¹

— Venerable Pope Pius XII

What is the closest possible union you can have with Jesus in this life? The answer is easy: your reception of Jesus in Holy Communion. There is no greater intimacy with Jesus possible in this life than when you receive the Eucharist at Holy Mass. The Blessed Sacrament is the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ.

Did you know that, without St. Joseph’s earthly paternity of Jesus, you would not now be able to receive the Bread of Life? Saint Joseph was given the role of maintaining and protecting the sacred bread for you.

Let me explain.

You are probably familiar with the story in the Book of Genesis about the sons of Israel selling one of their brothers into slavery. The brother sold into slavery was named Joseph. Joseph ended up being taken by his owners to Egypt, far away from all his other kin. What

the men did to their brother was horrible and shameful. But God had a plan.

Incredibly, Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, adopted Joseph into his own family so that Joseph was regarded as a son of Pharaoh. Joseph was given great authority; Pharaoh placed him in charge of all the granaries in Egypt. At that time, Egypt was considered the bread basket of the world, and Joseph did an incredible job of storing up grain.

Joseph stored up huge quantities of grain, like the sand of the sea; it was so much that he stopped keeping records because it was beyond measure.

— Gen 41:49

Though Joseph's brothers had sold him into slavery, God had wonderful plans for Joseph. After Joseph had stored up an immeasurable quantity of grain, a severe famine broke out in Egypt and the surrounding territories. As a result of the shortage of food, Pharaoh instructed everyone in Egypt: "Go to Joseph and do whatever he tells you!" (Gen 41:55). The famine became so extreme that Joseph's own brothers, the ones who had sold him into slavery, journeyed to Egypt in search of food.

When the brothers met the man in charge of the granaries in Egypt, so much time had elapsed that they did not realize that they were standing in the presence of their own brother, whom they had sold into slavery years ago. Like everyone else, they, too, considered Joseph to be Egyptian royalty, and they addressed him as their lord. Joseph, however, recognized them.

To make a long story short, Joseph hid his identity, but was filled with kindness and mercy toward his brothers. He provided grain for them, filling their sacks so they could take back plenty to their father, Israel. Eventually, Joseph revealed his identity to them and extended forgiveness to his brothers. Thanks to Joseph and his role as the keeper of the grain, countless lives were saved from famine and death.

The story related in the Old Testament is true and is a prefiguration of a much greater Joseph who would bring his Son, the Bread from Heaven, to safety in Egypt. Saint Joseph safeguarded a food capable of saving the entire world!

Saint Joseph, our spiritual father, is much greater than the Joseph of the Old Testament. Our Joseph was the keeper of the Bread from Heaven! His desire in heaven is that all of his children consume the Bread of Everlasting Life!

The former Joseph [of the Old Testament] was holy, righteous, pious, chaste; but this Joseph so far surpasses him in holiness and perfection as the sun outshines the moon.²

— St. Lawrence of Brindisi

God sent St. Joseph to Egypt so that, out of Egypt, St. Joseph could bring the Bread of Life to the nations. Saint Joseph saved our Bread from Herod; he protected and preserved him in Egypt; and he now desires that we receive the Bread of Life at Holy Mass. Unlike the Joseph of the Old Testament, St. Joseph's Heavenly Bread is more numerous than the sands of the sea. This Heavenly Bread is able to feed all the multitudes and satisfy every soul.

Pharaoh, the mighty king of Egypt, exalted Joseph and made him the highest prince in his kingdom, because he stored up the grain and bread and saved the people of his entire kingdom. So Joseph saved and protected Christ, who is the living bread and gives eternal life to the world.³

— St. Lawrence of Brindisi

He [St. Joseph] most diligently reared him whom the faithful were to receive as the bread that came down from heaven whereby they might obtain eternal life.⁴

— Blessed Pope Pius IX

If you want to form an idea of St. Joseph's greatness, consider that by a divine privilege he merited to bear the title "Father of Jesus." Reflect too that his own name "Joseph" means — an increase. Keeping in mind the great patriarch Joseph, sold by his brothers in Egypt, understand that our saint has inherited not only his name, but even more, his power, his innocence, and his sanctity. As the patriarch Joseph stored the wheat not for himself, but for the people in their time of need, so Joseph has received a heavenly commission to watch over the living Bread not for himself alone, but for the entire world.⁵

— St. Bernard of Clairvaux

Without Joseph, we would not have the Living Bread of the Eucharist. Mary "kneaded the dough" in her sacred womb; St. Joseph lovingly preserved the Bread in Egypt. He continues to guard and preserve the Bread of Life in every tabernacle in the world. Saint Joseph made it possible for all his children to receive the Bread of Everlasting Life.

[Saint] Joseph is still charged with guarding the Living Bread!⁶

— Venerable Fulton J. Sheen

Today, there is a worldwide spiritual and moral famine on the earth. Souls are dying because of a lack of spiritual nourishment. Hearts are broken; marriages are ruined; lives are destroyed; children are murdered in the womb; and truth and common sense are in short supply. The spiritual and moral famine in the world is devastating every nation, laying waste to humanity. There is not a single country left that has not been affected by it. What are we to do? To whom can we go to find nourishment for our souls?

Go to Joseph and do whatever he tells you!

— Gen 41:55

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Lawrence of Brindisi

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