

of Jesus is valid, of course, but Joseph's fatherhood was more fatherhood was an authoritative, fatherhood.

FATHERHOOD IS FOREVER. The loving father and child endures forever. In the Son of Joseph in heaven. In exercises a "legal" fatherhood over affection, and faithfulness toward Jesus, remains. Unlike marriage, gain into eternity (see Mt 22:30), over Christ and his Mystical Body

ual motherhood, endures forever. h would need to cease invoking Church would also be required to ven, as our spiritual mother.

OUR SPIRITUAL FATHER. What is nt Joseph is forever your spiritual hile on earth, St. Joseph will take mage. Saint Joseph is your loving When your life on earth is over, St. father, not on an earthly level, but d will forever be known as a child of

shly to praise Joseph, whom thou, e Father, has deigned to

— St. Ephrem the Syrian

of Jesus" (page 127)
of St. Joseph (page 213)

DAY 14

Zealous Defender of Christ, *Pray for Us*

He [St. Joseph] protects those who revere him and accompanies them on their journey through this life — just as he protected and accompanied Jesus when he was growing up.¹

— St. Josemaría Escrivá

From the moment the angel revealed to St. Joseph that he was to be the father of the Messiah to when he took his final breath in the arms of Jesus and Mary, St. Joseph zealously defended Jesus.

Saint Joseph always defended his Son from any threat against him. Saint Joseph was a dutiful watchman, guarding, defending, and sacrificing everything for Jesus and his safety. Saint Joseph offered the same protection for his wife, too. He protected his Son and his wife as a loving father and faithful husband.

In some translations of the Litany of St. Joseph, the title "Zealous Defender of Christ" (in Latin, *Christi Defensor Sedule*) is given as "Diligent Defender of Christ" or "Watchful Defender of Christ." Both are acceptable translations and have similar meanings — namely, St. Joseph defended Jesus. As a child of St. Joseph, you can have great confidence knowing that your spiritual father also desires to zealously defend you.

SAINT JOSEPH ZEALOUSLY DEFENDS YOU. The paternal mission of St. Joseph is not finished. A father's work is never finished until his children are safely home. In heaven, St. Joseph no longer needs to watch over and protect Jesus. You, however, are not yet in heaven. You need the protection of St. Joseph. Your spiritual father knows what is harmful to your soul, and he wants to watch over you and help you arrive safely home. Saint Joseph will never abandon you. Your role is to entrust yourself to his diligent care and never look back.

Our destiny is in the hands of Joseph. Joseph, the guardian of his Lord and the spouse of his Queen, Joseph, the foster father of Jesus and the head of the Holy Family, has in his kindness deigned to accept us as his children and permits us to call him father.²

— Blessed William Joseph Chaminade

You have nothing to fear with St. Joseph at your side. What is there to be afraid of with such a zealous defender as your father who loves you? Saint Joseph held the Maker of the Universe in his hands. Saint Joseph fed the Creator of the heavens. In his role as earthly father to Jesus, St. Joseph lovingly commanded the Son of God. Heaven and earth obeyed him. All hell trembles before him!

Joseph's name will be a name of protection all during our lives.³

— Blessed William Joseph Chaminade

SAINT JOSEPH WILL INCREASE YOUR ZEAL FOR CHRIST. As your father and model, St. Joseph will teach you how to defend Christ zealously. If you are a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ, you are going to be criticized, hated, ridiculed, and mocked by the world — oftentimes by your own family and friends. Your suffering will be great, but your witness to truth — your witness to Jesus — will be greater. Saint Joseph will help you be a zealous witness to the truth of Jesus Christ.

YOUR DEFENSE OF CHRIST MUST BE GREAT. You should always strive to defend the person and name of Jesus Christ against all blasphemy, insult, and sacrilege. You must defend the Church, as well as her teachings and Sacraments, from all attacks, heresies, and falsehoods. To defend the Church is to defend Christ. You must resemble your spiritual father, always willing to sacrifice yourself for love of truth. Like St. Joseph, you, too, can bring many souls to Jesus.

How happy and blessed are they whom you [St. Joseph] love and whom you take under your protection!⁴

— Blessed William Joseph Chaminade

Read "Savior of the Savior" (page 159)
Pray the Litany of St. Joseph (page 233)