

## DAY 28

### Comfort of the Afflicted, Pray for Us

Nothing will be refused him [St. Joseph], neither by Our Lady nor by his glorious Son.<sup>1</sup>

— St. Francis de Sales

Comforting the afflicted is a work of mercy. The Church has seven Spiritual Works of Mercy and seven Corporal Works of Mercy. The works of mercy help us to be devout followers of Jesus Christ by serving others; they help us to be like St. Joseph.

#### SEVEN CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY

Feed the Hungry  
Give Drink to the Thirsty  
Clothe the Naked  
Shelter the Homeless  
Visit the Prisoners  
Comfort the Sick  
Bury the Dead

#### SEVEN SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY

Teach the Ignorant  
Pray for the Living and the Dead  
Correct Sinners  
Counsel Those in Doubt  
Console the Sorrowful  
Bear Wrongs Patiently  
Forgive Wrongs Willingly

The Latin title *Solacium Miserorum* is generally translated as “Comfort of the Afflicted,” but it can also be rendered “Solace of the Miserable” or “Solace of Those in Misery.” Experiencing misery or feeling miserable is not pleasant. Yet the reality is that we are all going to have miserable moments in life. This world is a valley of tears, and everyone is going to suffer. There is no way around it. Whether it’s financial problems, marital hardships, psychological struggles, difficulties in relationships, the death of loved ones, or a thousand other woes, we will all experience misery in life. It’s good to have someone we can turn to for comfort and solace in such times.

*SAINT JOSEPH WILL COMFORT YOU IN DIFFICULT TIMES.* Life is filled with many sorrows. Loved ones will die, children sometimes rebel, and gravity will eventually take away your youthfulness, making you old and immobile. No matter what life brings, however, St. Joseph will always be your consolation, comfort, and solace. He knows well

the hardships of life. He is a kind and loving father. He comforts everyone who comes to him in times of affliction. His fatherhood is unlike any other.

Let us commend ourselves to our good father, St. Joseph, who is the Patriarch of troubled people, since he himself went through so much trouble.<sup>2</sup>

— St. Joseph Marello

A loving father provides comfort to his children, especially when they are going through difficulties. A father's wisdom and presence are reassuring and life-giving. Knowing you can always go to your father in difficult times reassures you that everything will be okay, even when your world seems to be falling apart. Regrettably, many people have never experienced this kind of love from a father. Many people today have grown up with emotionally abusive, distant, and less-than-virtuous fathers. This has led many people to experience great anxieties and fears in life, as well as a tremendous sense of insecurity.

God wants you to rest in St. Joseph's fatherhood. Saint Joseph will never abandon you. No matter what your experience of fatherhood has been, St. Joseph will always be there for you. He is your spiritual dad, and he loves you. He will never hurt you. He would give his life for you a million times over.

When life has you down, run to your spiritual father. Pour out your heart to him. Tell him your troubles. He is the most loving of fathers. He is always available for you, always attentive, always understanding.

If discouragement overwhelms you, think of the faith of Joseph; if anxiety has its grip on you, think of the hope of Joseph; if exasperation or hatred seizes you, think of the love of Joseph, who was the first man to set eyes on the human face of God in the person of the Infant conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary. Let us praise and thank Christ for having drawn so close to us, and for giving us Joseph as an example and model of love.<sup>3</sup>

— Pope Benedict XVI

Read "Pious Union of St. Joseph" (page 215)  
Pray the Litany of St. Joseph (page 233)