

DEACON MARTIN RICART

Awareness that we can't do this journey alone is the first step taken in an owned faith walk. The Church, the Body of Christ, is the means by which the deposit of faith is handed on throughout salvation history. As men, we take our place in the Body as we move forward in humility, placing our families and communities before ourselves in the just model of St. Joseph.

My intent is to encourage young fathers to seek out the Fraternity of St. Joseph's resource document titled ***The Saint Joseph Seven-Day Family Devotional*** for intentional fatherhood. This devotional will bring a quick awareness of St. Joseph's seven guiding graces of family life, which are shared over a week of family prayer.

Reflecting on the grace-filled gifts of our Catholic faith, revealed over a week of a young family gathered in prayer shared through virtues paired with each day's gifts, is a gift itself, meant to be woven into the hearts and wills of the intentional father's family.

The mission of the FSJ Men's Group is to impart the value of each man's faith-filled gifts to his family, community, and the next generation of Catholics. Visit fsjourneymen.com to access the devotional resource. You can learn more about me by looking up the **St. Joseph Paternal Leaders** resource.

I encourage you to commit to starting each day with the binding prayer included in this pamphlet and the devotional. This prayer will help you to start each day by placing your faith and family before yourself.

Will you accept this call?

Thy will be done...

COMMUNITY IS WHAT BINDS US

We can't do this journey alone.
Commit to building up a band of brothers
to face the trials ahead.

BAND OF BROTHERS PRAYER

*Heavenly Father,
help us to turn to you in humility,
and through obedience and discipline,
place you back into our hearts,
our wills, our families, our faith communities,
and, ultimately, our public square.
Through the Holy Spirit,
in the just model of St. Joseph,
through the sacred heart of Jesus' name, we pray,
Amen!*

Let your Yes mean Yes!

Commit to reciting the following family binding prayer daily to become steadfast in sharing your gift of self, which in your example, will be woven into the hearts and wills of the family God placed in your care.

ST. JOSEPH FAMILY DEVOTIONAL BINDING PRAYER

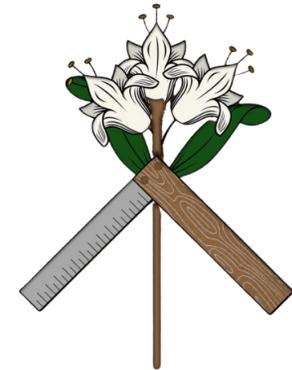
*Mother Mary, most pure,
loving father St. Joseph,
I give myself totally to you,
as your possession to make of me,
and all that I am and have,
whatever is most pleasing to you.
Guide me and my family,
through the Holy Spirit,
to your loving son Jesus,
that through Him we may bring
the greatest possible glory to God,
our loving Father. Amen!*



The Fraternity of St. Joseph
Men's Group
St. Thomas Aquinas Chapter
Charlotte, NC
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Saint Joseph

and the Vocation of Fatherhood



Introduction to the

SAINT JOSEPH SEVEN-DAY FAMILY DEVOTIONAL

The purpose of the St. Joseph devotional is to make young fathers aware of the virtues they need to overcome the secular challenges of the world and carry out their true God-given roles as the spiritual heads of their families.

Intentional fatherhood is a journey that requires not only virtuous living, but also steadfast prayer and a brotherhood of men willing to support, encourage, and provide examples to each other on how to achieve a peaceful family life.

Foretold knowledge of the challenges ahead for a young family can help set realistic expectations for the intentional father.

Step closer to yourself and your family by turning the page of your family's love story at this grace-filled moment in your family's life.

Let your Yes mean Yes!

THE GATHERING STAGE

Wisdom shares that many well-formed young men lose their faith when they begin meeting the needs of the physical world and all its material attractions. While gathering/providing for worldly needs (the gathering stage of life), they unwittingly trade tradition for trend, leaving no room for growth in the spiritual realm. Not until much later in their masculine journeys do many comprehend that their misguided approach has wounded their families. The grim realization sets in that the secular culture and mindset have now blinded and separated their families from their true identities as beloved children of God. This difficult dynamic is extremely hard to unwind.

In this pamphlet, testimonials are presented by two fathers who bear witness to different paths taken in their God-given role as heads of their families. Along with these testimonials are words of encouragement from Deacon Martin Ricart, who urges all men, especially young fathers, to take the steps required to move forward intentionally in their walk of faith.

As fathers, before we can intentionally lead, we must first humbly follow. The *St. Joseph Seven-Day Family Devotional* encourages fathers to seek out an awareness of the guiding virtues, through the just model of St. Joseph, and to explore how to intentionally form these virtues in every stage of family life. The devotional will:

- Guide you in how to weave the virtues into the hearts and wills of your family.
- Instill in you the fortitude needed to navigate life's challenges ahead.
- Show you not only how to overcome your own faults, but also how to love your family past their faults, mirroring the unconditional love of our Heavenly Father.

MATTHEW BOSNICK

I was asked to contribute testimony as an intentional young father. Through witnessing my father's example of fatherhood, I know no other view. My intentional fatherhood is the direct result of my father's owned faith, seen in the lives of his family. Now, having a family of my own, I can see how my view of family life is very different from many of my peers. My father's steadfast approach has helped form my convictions of being intentional with my own family. I am blessed to have witnessed the peaceful resolve that living out family life, steeped in Sacred Tradition, reveals over time. My firsthand view of family, living out the sacramental life of the Church, has helped me bear witness to how family life can peacefully meet the trials of daily life.

It is the parents' responsibility to discipline their children, while at the same time nurturing them. Acceptance of the suffering that this discipline may bring is needed for children to become well-formed adults. This knowledge is the gift that I received from my parents, my father, which I am now intentionally reflecting onto my own family.

Some simple examples of how my wife and I are intentionally sharing our faith with our young family include our committed observance of Sunday and holy days of obligation, as well as our gathering in prayer before meals and teaching our children the virtues, especially charity.

I personally sanctify my children daily by placing the sign of the cross on their foreheads while verbally blessing them. I believe this to be a most powerful sign of sharing my faith with my family.

Mirroring my father's example of family life steeped in Sacred Tradition is the gift of fatherhood that I intend to hand on to my family.

JERRY MICHEL

Sharing my testimony is the reason this pamphlet was created. The need to share with young fathers, my past shortcomings of failing to lead my family in the sacramental life of the Church, is the motivation. Bringing awareness to the burden that I carry with me every day of my life is my aim. The fact needs to be known that many men from my generation share this common feeling of having fallen short in handing on the deposit of faith. This poor example of fatherhood, witnessed throughout the generations, has placed us where we are in salvation history today. In my experience, this truth is realized through our faithless public square and is the direct result of the lack of intentional fathering during the gathering stage of life. The formative years in a young family's life cannot be revisited. In many ways, my generation merely lived out a handed-on "family faith tradition," which we never owned and thus lacked the graces found in our Sacred Tradition. I encourage self-examination of what this might look like in your own family.

Looking back, I can now clearly see the trials my family has faced, through their experience of a poor example of fatherhood in our home, while living outside a state of grace. The trials ahead for future generations of our family will be greater than those of my own family. The importance of young men understanding their true vocation in the gathering stage of life is, in my opinion, the answer to the test of life.

I contribute much of my family's adolescent faith to my following my father's example of simply handing on our "family faith tradition" without encouraging us to seek out and live the objective truths found in the deposit of faith. Humility, obedience, and discipline to Church teachings in the gathering stage is the way forward and is my vital prayer for your family.