

# ST. JOSEPH DAY PRAYER SERVICE

## St. Joseph a man of Unity and Reconciliation



### Preparations

Set up a small table some with symbolic articles that reflect the character and qualities of St. Joseph. Before the prayer service a teacher or student leader should explain what each symbol on the table means and how it relates to the life of St. Joseph.

Symbolic articles may include:

✂ **Open Bible** - The Word of God reminds us that St. Joseph faithfully followed God's call in his life.

✂ **Statue of St. Joseph or the Holy Family** - A statue could be taken from a crèche set if you don't have a single statue of St. Joseph; a photo of St. Joseph is another option.

✂ **Large walking stick** - The stick reminds us of St. Joseph's journey through life's joys, struggles, and dreams, much like our own faith journey through life.

✂ **Candle**

✂ **Symbol of what the school has been doing this school year to plant the seeds of Unity and Reconciliation** - This is an opportunity to recall how your school has faithfully kept its promise of Unity and Reconciliation. Recall and reflect together how St. Joseph is a model and an example of a promise keeper. St. Joseph reminds us that God's promises are fulfilled.

### Leader (Opening Prayer)

Oh God, you gave St. Joseph the incredible job of joining Mary in caring for the child Jesus. Through St. Joseph's intercession and the prayerful remembrances we make to him grant us the grace to nurture the life of Christ in our lives through expressions of Unity and Reconciliation. Help us guide and support one another in truth, love and justice so we continue building up the body of your Church. We ask this in the name of Jesus who brings life to all through the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Song** (Suggestions: *Joseph the Wise and Humble*; *Hail Holy Joseph, Hail, St. Gregory*; *Everyday Man*, Linda Faulhaber, CSJ, Sr. Theresa La Metterey, CSJ)

### Reader #1

Let us gather today in joyful celebration of St. Joseph. The life of St. Joseph reminds us that God's promises are fulfilled. Let us remember the life of St. Joseph and his response to God's call.

### Reader #2

St. Joseph was the husband of Mary. We do not know much about him; however, what has been written regarding his life reveals to us that he was a faithful and prayerful man who loved and trusted God very much. He is honored and respected as a saint, for he responded to the call of God in the unfolding plan of salvation for all human kind.



Joseph loved Mary and the child Jesus. He was a good and faithful father who helped form Jesus as he grew up and worried about him just like any loving parent.



As a father, St. Joseph taught Jesus the skill of carpentry and the ability to work with his hands. Furthermore, as a good Jewish father, he taught Jesus Jewish law and teachings. He cared for and guarded Mary his beloved wife and the well-being of their home.

Today, the entire Church of God remembers and reflects upon the humble and empowering gifts St. Joseph's life teaches us. Let us pray that St. Joseph will help to be compassionate in our caring for others, as we continue to plant seeds of Unity and Reconciliation.

### Leader

As we gather to honor St. Joseph we also remember the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange. Today is their Community feast day. What does this mean? It means that since the beginning and founding of the Sisters' congregation in the year 1650 they have placed all their good works under God's blessing and under the example, care, guidance and protection of St. Joseph.

St. Joseph inspires the Sisters to bring people closer to God and closer to one another by ministering to their spiritual and physical needs in his manner.

Kindness, trustworthiness, compassion, faithfulness, unity and reconciliation are the virtues Joseph modeled for the child Jesus and Mary. We seek to live these virtues.

Today is a moment of grace for all of us as we continue to be promise keepers who plant seeds of Unity and Reconciliation. We pray for the strength to be models of caring and compassion among others. St. Joseph, a carpenter, saw beauty in ordinary wood, and he also saw the connectedness of human relationships. He crafted beauty in human encounters as he welcomed, respected, helped, loved and promoted acts of unity and reconciliation. He was faithful and constant because his heart was in tune with the heart of God. We turn to St. Joseph and ask his protection for ourselves and our world.

### Reader #3

To the following petitions please respond: ***St. Joseph inspire and guide us.***

St. Joseph, just one, you are a model of caring, presence, courage and integrity;

***St. Joseph inspire and guide us.***

St. Joseph, you were honest and a man of integrity;

***St. Joseph inspire and guide us.***

St. Joseph, you were faithful to the mystery of your dreams and followed God's call;

***St. Joseph inspire and guide us.***

St. Joseph, you respected the common good, empower us to be bearers of gentleness to all persons;

***St. Joseph inspire and guide us.***

St. Joseph, you trusted in God's will and word for your life, help us to be faithful promise keepers of unity and reconciliation;

***St. Joseph inspire and guide us.***

St. Joseph, patron saint of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange, bless them always. Be with the co-ministers of the Sisters in areas of education, health care and spiritual guidance, so that all might know the loving presence of God in their lives;

***St. Joseph inspire and guide us.***

### **Leader**

The many virtues of St. Joseph are a blessing and grace for us. What virtue of St. Joseph will you pray for? Kindness? Courage? Integrity? Compassion? Faithfulness? Turn to the person next to you and share the virtue you will pray for and how it will help you become a person of Unity and Reconciliation.

*Allow time for sharing.*

### **Leader**

Creator God, help us to imitate St. Joseph. We ask in St. Joseph's name, that our life and work be lived each day with steadfast love, gentle strength, and enduring hope as we strive to be people of Unity and Reconciliation. Help us care for others as Joseph did for Jesus and Mary. May we bring peace within our own family, school, workplace, city and neighborhoods. We ask this in the name of Jesus, your Son who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.

