

Tomorrow evening at
6:45: The Novena to
Our Lady of Sorrows.

University of Notre Dame
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Tomorrow -- all day: Adora-
tion in the Lady Chapel of
Sacred Heart Church.

Thoughts About St. Joseph

Years ago, before any of you came to Notre Dame, there was a man here with the soul of a poet, a keen mind, and a discipline of expression -- who used to walk through the woods and around the lakes, and meditate on the Holy Family. About St. Joseph he once wrote:

"Coming home at evening
He had his loaf and wine,
And he saw in a young Child's eyes
All the stars shine.

"The shop he kept as carpenter
Was swept by seraphim.
Almost, the Son of God
Was lackey to him.

An eagle on Patmos
Soaring, saw and heard
The secret things that Joseph knew
Who never said a word."

That's right -- in all the Bible there is not one word quoted from St. Joseph. We wistfully wonder what thoughts went through his mind, who cared for the Christ Child and His Mother, and who learned from angels what no other dared believe, regarding the Offspring Who was regarded as his Son.

St. Joseph In Our Own Lives

We doubt that there were as many glaring temptations in his day as in ours. He had no movies in Nazareth, no billboards, no newspapers, magazines, or stage shows. But the pagans of his day couldn't have been much different from modern pagans. They probably tried somehow, to exchange filth for money, even in little towns like Nazareth.

Undoubtedly there were lewd mouths on the streets, in shops, and even, sometimes, on rostrums that talked pagan immorality to the young men of his day.

St. Joseph was young once, and probably had temptations of one sort or another; but he kept himself so clean of all that environment that God chose him to be the spouse of His young and beautiful Mother. Surely, he must have been troubled and afraid when that announcement came to him. It was more than a little strange -- his fiancée a virgin, who, still as a virgin, would become a mother, mother of the Christ!

Divine Providence seemed to have placed many burdens upon his shoulders. What of the embarrassing trip to Bethlehem with no accommodations at the inns! What of mad Herod scheming with power and violence, and the fugitive trip into Egypt! What of the three gloomy days when the Christ-Child was lost to him and Mary in Jerusalem!

God could have saved him all these anxieties. But He didn't. He tested the prudence, and the courage, and the loyalty -- just as by trial He had proved Joseph's chastity. God had His reasons in Joseph's life, just as He has His reasons in ours.

Tomorrow is the Feast of this same Joseph. It might be better if we asked him not so much to be free from temptations, but rather for two other graces: 1) to be pure in spite of temptations; and 2) someday to head a family that St. Joseph and Our Lady will be proud of, and that God will bless abundantly.

Tomorrow -- Archbishop Noll dispenses all from both fast and abstinence.

PRAYERS - relative of Brother Boniface, CSC; friend of Jim McDonagh of St. Ed's.
friend of Ed Prud'homme of Breen-Phillips. Ill: mother of Paul Matz of Badin)
(operation).