



HOW TO RECEIVE A PLENARY INDULGENCE DURING THE YEAR OF ST. JOSEPH

On December 8, 2020, the feast day of the Immaculate Conception - which also turned out to be the 150th anniversary of the proclamation of St. Joseph as the Patron of the Universal Church - Pope Francis proclaimed a **Year of St. Joseph**. The **Year of St. Joseph**, which is from December 8, 2020 to December 8, 2021 is an invitation to all the faithful “to increase our love for this great saint, to encourage us to implore his intercession and to imitate his virtues and his zeal”.

During this Year of St. Joseph, the Faithful can receive **plenary indulgences**. An indulgence is a remission of the temporal punishment that one deserves due to sins committed. From the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* we read that “an indulgence is a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven, which the faithful Christian who is duly disposed gains under certain prescribed conditions through the action of the Church which, as the minister of redemption, dispenses and applies with authority the treasury of the satisfactions of Christ and the saints. An indulgence is partial or plenary according as it removes either part or all of the temporal punishment due to sin. Indulgences may be applied to the living or the dead (CCC 1471)”.

In order to receive an indulgence, one has to be in a state of grace (i.e. go to Confession), attend Mass, receive Holy Communion and pray for the Pope’s intentions. During the Year of St. Joseph, the Faithful can receive a plenary indulgence when they fulfill these conditions as well as participate in any of the following:

- meditate on the Our Father prayer for at least 30 minutes or take part in a spiritual retreat of at least one day that includes a meditation on St. Joseph;
- perform a corporal or spiritual work of mercy;
- recite the rosary together as a family or as couples;
- entrust their daily work to St. Joseph or ask St. Joseph to intercede for the unemployed;
- recite a prayer to St. Joseph (e.g. the litanies of St. Joseph in Latin rite, or *Akathistos* to St. Joseph in the Byzantine rite, or any other prayer to St. Joseph) for the relief of Christians persecuted both inside and outside of the Church
- recite “any legitimately approved prayer or act of piety in honor of St. Joseph,” with an encouragement to do so on the March 19 and May 1 feasts of St. Joseph, the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, the Byzantine celebration of St. Joseph’s Sunday, and on the 19th of every month and on every Wednesday, which has been dedicated to St. Joseph in the Latin rite; and
- the elderly, sick, dying and those legitimately unable to leave the house, who recite an act of piety to St. Joseph under his title of Comfort of the Sick and Patron of a happy death, provided they offer their discomfort to God and fulfill the conditions for the indulgence “as soon as possible”.