JOSEPH, GUIDE AND PROTECTOR OF JESUS AND MARY

~ Unknown Artist
THE BLESSED MIRIAM TERESA LEAGUE OF PRAYER BULLETIN

Purpose of the League: To honor the Blessed Trinity through the Immaculate Heart of Mary by spreading the knowledge of Blessed Miriam Teresa’s life and mission, and by working for her cause.

President…………...............Sister Maureen Shaughnessy, SC

TEAM

Obligations: 1. Daily recitation of 26 Glorias in honor of the Most Holy Trinity for the success of the cause. (An Our Father may be substituted.) 2. A small sacrifice daily.

Spiritual Privileges: for the intentions of League Members.
1. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is offered 100 times each year. 2. Special private prayers are offered every day by the Sisters of Charity.

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POSTMASTER SEND all address changes to the above address

Presently we are living in the year of Saint Joseph (December 8, 2020 – December 8, 2021). It is a delight to know this simple, gentle yet courageous man is being recognized for the beautiful qualities and wholesome spirituality he gave life to during his years on earth. It was almost 7 years ago when my heart rejoiced when I heard that the Congregation for Divine Worship promulgated that the name of St. Joseph be included in all the Eucharistic Prayers. Recognizing the goodness and fidelity of this tender, loving man, who was attentive to God’s promptings in his heart and responded wholeheartedly to the Angel’s invitation that he take Mary into his home and care for her and her son, deserves our unconditional response.

We are most grateful to all who joined us for the Novena Prayer for a miraculous healing for Paul, Thomas and Robert that occurred from February 2nd to February 11th. Continue to pray for them and all God’s People who are seeking healing through the intercession of Blessed Miriam Teresa.

In many ways you will read about the similarities of St. Joseph’s and Blessed Miriam Teresa’s spirituality. These connections are not exhausted; if you have other insights and or suggestions, please let me know.

~ Sister Maureen Corcoran, SC
With joy in his heart, Pope Francis proclaimed a “Year of Saint Joseph”, remembering the 150\textsuperscript{th} anniversary of the declaration of Saint Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church. Accompanying this proclamation Pope Francis wrote a new Apostolic Letter entitled, Patris Corde (“With a Father’s Heart”). In this letter Pope Francis portrays Saint Joseph as a beloved, tender, loving and obedient man of God who as a father was creatively courageous, a worker, one who accepted his challenges in life and who so frequently was the father in the shadows. In this letter Pope Francis indicates that many of us made hidden sacrifices to protect others during Covid-19 just as Saint Joseph quietly protected and cared for Mary and Jesus in their times of need. Blessed Miriam Teresa during the pandemic of 1918, like Saint Joseph, served her family with charity and humility on a daily basis as a teenager. In many ways she discreetly supported and guided them in their time of need. Saint Joseph was a hidden presence in the life of the Holy Family; Blessed Miriam Teresa went about her tasks in a similar manner, almost unnoticed.

Qualities of Saint Joseph are akin to Blessed Miriam Teresa as her life reflects the inner goodness and strength he bore in spite of the challenges he faced. Both of these icons of faith lived with hearts full of great tenderness. They model for us a deep compassion and a genuine openness to others.

When the angel appeared to Saint Joseph in a dream he prepared Joseph for the significant role he would play in God’s saving plan. Likewise Blessed Miriam Teresa was prepared as a college student at the College of Saint Elizabeth when Mary, the Mother of our Savior, visited her as she sat quietly in her room in Santa Rita Hall praying the rosary. As she prayed, the heavens got brighter and brighter and Miriam saw our Blessed Mother. As far as we know, no words were exchanged but, like Joseph, she entered into the experience and eventually came to realize God’s dream for her.

A quality I recognize in both Saint Joseph and Blessed Miriam Teresa is “oneness.” As Joseph was warned by the angel to take Mary and Jesus from Bethlehem into Egypt to escape the killing of the young innocents, Miriam would condemn acts of violence that immigrants are undergoing in our society today. She would encourage us to use our energy to build up the Kingdom of God in today’s world. Her mission was to bring all people into oneness with God, each other and all creation; isn’t our mission today in keeping with hers?
Parallel virtues that Saint Joseph and Blessed Miriam Teresa share ought to challenge us to pattern some of these spiritual qualities in our personal lives. Saint Joseph was the protector for the Holy Family; he was always looking out for Mary and Jesus who were entrusted to his care. In much the same way, Blessed Miriam Teresa was sensitive to those entrusted to her care; she was steadfast in doing God’s work given to her and wasn’t found cutting corners. Both of these icons of fidelity were committed to doing good – not merely following rules. In their quiet, silent presence they were pillars of strength.

Both Saint Joseph and Blessed Miriam Teresa teach us how to turn difficulties and challenges into possibilities as we listen to our heavenly Father and trust in divine providence. Both show us that nothing in this world ought to be our security but we ought to live each day our pilgrimage on earth focused on God with the energy of our whole life.

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**PRAYERS FOR DECEASED**

**MSGR. THOMAS KLEISSLER**  
(Founder of RENEW International)

**REV. MSGR. JAMES J. SINNERTY**

**REV. PEDRO NAVARRO**

**SISTER KATHLEEN MURPHY, SC**

**SISTER ANN PRESSLER, SC**

**MARY FLOOD**

**GERTRUDE SALERNO**

**KRYSYNA BORYCZEWSKI**

**THOMAS MCKINNEY**

**KIERAN MCKINNEY**

**CAMILLA OSUJI**

**OLYMPIA FRANCO/MARION BRADFORD**

**MARY ANN MCKENNA**

**PATRICIA SHAW CURTIS**

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**JANET BERNA**

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**PATRICIA T. REYNOLDS**

**JANE T. REYNOLDS**

**DR. ANTOINETTE CECERE, MD**  
(Former Pres. of Medical Services, St. Joseph Hospital, Paterson)

**WILLIAM GOODE**

**BARBARA LINDEGROVE EASLEY**

**JAMES DONNELLY**

**MARY VARICK, SETON ASSOCIATE**

**LUKE WALSH**

**ELLEN ROGAN MILLER**

**SEAN DAVID LARKIN**

**CAROL BULLOCK, SETON ASSOCIATE**

**BARBARA MCCARTHY**

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On our journey through Lent, Pope Francis encourages us to Fast in this manner:

* Fast from hurting words and say kind words.
* Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude.
* Fast from anger and be filled with patience.
* Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope.
* Fast from worries and have trust in God.
* Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity.
* Fast from pressures and be prayerful.
* Fast from bitterness and fill your hearts with joy.
* Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others.
* Fast from grudges and be reconciled.
* Fast from words and be silent so you can listen.
ALEXANDER DEMJANOVICH: A SLOW AND STEADY FIRE
by Fr. Terrence J. Moran

On December 8, 2020, Pope Francis surprised the Catholic world by calling for a Year of St. Joseph extending to December 8, 2021. Pope Francis clearly thinks that St. Joseph offers a measure of comfort and consolation to our COVID-exhausted world. In his beautiful Apostolic Letter Patris Corde (From a Father’s Heart), Pope Francis calls Joseph, “the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence — an intercessor, a supporter and a guide in times of trouble. Saint Joseph reminds us that those who appear hidden or in the shadows can play an incomparable role in the history of salvation.” Pope Francis points out that during the pandemic the great ones of this world most often failed us. It was the ordinary people, health care workers, grocery store clerks, home health aides, whose fidelity kept the world running. One of those “men who goes unnoticed” is the father of Blessed Miriam Teresa, Alexander Demjanovich. But he was surely “a daily, discreet and hidden presence” in the early life of Blessed Miriam Teresa; a presence that was formative of her experience of God and her holiness.

Alexander Demjanovich was born on July 16, 1860. The population of Nazareth at the time of St. Joseph was from 200-400 people most of whom were subsistence farmers. Bardejov, Slovakia, the hometown of Alexander was a quite a bit more prosperous with a charming medieval town center. Both Joseph and Alexander were skilled craftsmen. It’s common to refer to Joseph as a carpenter. But the Greek word the gospels use for Joseph’s profession tekton means more than a woodworker. In tiny Nazareth there would not have been a sufficient market for cabinets to keep Joseph employed. He was more like a general handyman and probably an itinerant worker, travelling among the Galilean villages looking for odd jobs with Jesus as an apprentice. Alexander was a shoemaker, both fashioning and repairing custom made shoes.

Both the Demjanovich family and the Holy Family knew dislocation in the first years of married life. Alexander and Johanna Szuchy married in February of 1884 and shortly after undertook the long and unpleasant ship passage to America. Similarly Joseph and Mary knew the lot of the refugee as they travelled to Egypt to flee the murderous Herod. The reason for the Demjanovich immigration is unclear. Some biographies refer to a honeymoon trip after which they intended to return to Slovakia; an unlikely extravagance for a couple of modest means. Whatever their motivations, they settled in the United States, for a short time in lower Manhattan and then to a permanent home in the industrial city of Bayonne, NJ. There being little market for custom shoes in Bayonne, Alexander found work in one of the many oil refineries of Bayonne, his profession for the rest of his life.

One of the attractions of Bayonne for
Alexander and Johanna Demjanovich was ease of access to a parish of their Ruthenian Catholic rite. Both Joseph and Alexander were deeply spiritual men. As an itinerant worker, Joseph would have had the opportunity to study the Torah in many of the synagogues of Galilee, giving him a wider theological education than was possible for Jews confined to their village. A pious Jewish home was a very prayerful place with time of prayer throughout the day and special blessings uttered for many daily activities – on seeing the rising sun, on breaking bread, on washing your hands, on performing any good work. The Demjanovich household was also characterized by family prayer morning and evening. Into this devout environment Alexander and Johanna welcomed their seventh child, Teresa, on March 26, 1901. Among the scant personal possessions of Blessed Miriam Teresa is found her childhood prayerbook of the Ruthenian Church containing various molebens – devotions to Jesus, Mary, and the saints; a testimony to the early religious formation received in her home. Every evening the family would gather to hear the reading of the life of the saint of the day. The beauty of holiness is something that young Teresa learned in the warmth of the family circle.

There is a traditional Catholic devotion to the seven joys and seven sorrows of the life of Saint Joseph. It reminds us that human life, even of the holiest of families, is a succession of lights and shadows. And so Joseph, Mary, and Jesus, along with their extended family, knew the simple joys of village life, of work together, of Sabbath rest, of periodic wedding feasts, and of pilgrimages to the holy city, Jerusalem. They also knew the plight of the refugee, the insecurity of living in a foreign land. As members of a people occupied by the Roman Empire, they knew the crushing burden of taxation, amounting from one third to one half of the annual income. The life of a Galilean peasant was a precarious one and one bad harvest could mean permanent financial ruin.

The Demjanovich family also knew that life of intermingled joys and sorrows. Like many immigrant families, they sacrificed to provide an education for their children. In the early 20th century only 4% of American young people went to college. A fraction of them were women. It’s a testimony to the parenting of Alexander and Johanna Demjanovich that they recognized the exceptional talents of their daughter Teresa and encouraged her to attend the College of Saint Elizabeth with its rigorous classical curriculum. Teresa’s adolescent years were characterized by the deteriorating health of her mother. Her studies, home duties, and care of her mother left little time for diversions. Teresa and her brother John were known for their wit and their efforts to entertain the family. The scriptures tell us nothing about the death of Joseph but he disappears from the pages of the gospels before the death of Jesus. Jesus and Mary and their extended family knew the heartbreak of the death of Joseph. The Demjanovich family would experience that trial with the death of their mother on November 27, 1918. Blessed Miriam Teresa’s biographers speculate that her father’s
encouragement for her to matriculate at the College of Saint Elizabeth in 1919 was partly to discourage her interest in becoming a cloistered Carmelite nun. At the very least, Alexander wanted his talented daughter to have a wider experience of the world and the opportunity to develop her talents before making such a life decision. And so God used Alexander’s very human motivations to help direct his daughter to the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth as her training ground in holiness and the mission of her life.

Doubtless Alexander welcomed the return of his youngest to the family circle on her graduation with honors from the College of Saint Elizabeth in June of 1923. This was also a time of Teresa’s first experiences in teaching as well as a time of intense vocational discernment. Humanly speaking, Alexander welcomed Teresa’s decision to join the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, less austere than the life of Carmel and a place where her talents would flourish.

As Mary and Jesus experienced the death of Joseph, so Teresa would experience the wrenching sorrow of her father’s death before her entrance into the convent. In January of 1925, Alexander contracted the flu which quickly developed into a fatal pneumonia. He died on January 30, 1925. His funeral was held on February 2—the date assigned for Teresa’s entrance into religious life. Her entrance was postponed until February 11, the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. Heavy with grief, Teresa left her home for the last time to begin her short but exceptional religious life. As Jesus spent the largest portion of his life with his family in Nazareth, Blessed Miriam Teresa’s formation in holiness took place mainly in the Demjanovich family circle.

Just as the gospels offer scant information about the life of St. Joseph, so we know little about the personality and life circumstances of Alexander Demjanovich. But Joseph and Alexander had the same way of holiness—fidelity to the will of God in the midst of an ordinary life of work, family relationships, and participation in a faith community. Simple faithfulness to the ordinary duties of life as a way of profound intimacy with God is the center of the spirituality of Blessed Miriam Teresa. She learned this first in the home of Alexander and Johanna Demjanovich. There were few fireworks in the lives of either Saint Joseph or Alexander Demjanovich. Their holiness was rather a slow and steady fire; a daily, discrete, and hidden presence, in the words of Pope Francis. During this year of Saint Joseph, let’s become more conscious of and grateful for those “Joseph people,” like Alexander Demjanovich whose simple, ordinary fidelity warms an often cold and indifferent world.
LITANY OF SAINT JOSEPH

Lord, have mercy on us  Christ, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.
Jesus, hear us,  Jesus, graciously hear us.

God, the Father of heaven,
God, the Son, Redeemer of the World,
God, the Holy Spirit,
Holy Trinity, one God,
Holy Mary,
St. Joseph,
Renowned offspring of David,
Light of Patriarchs,
Spouse of the Mother of God,
Chaste guardian of the Virgin,
Foster father of the Son of God,
Diligent protector of Christ,
Head of the Holy Family,
Joseph, most just,
Joseph, most chaste,
Joseph, most prudent,
Joseph, most strong,
Joseph, most obedient,
Joseph, most faithful,
Mirror of patience,
Lover of poverty,
Model of artisans,
Glory of home life,
Guardian of virgins,
Pillar of families,
Solace of the wretched,
Hope of the sick,
Patron of the dying,
Terror of demons,
Protector of Holy Church,

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,  have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,  have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,  have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,  have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,  have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,  spare us, O Jesus.
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,  graciously hear us, O Jesus.
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,  have mercy on us, O Jesus.

He made him the lord of his household and prince over all his possessions.

Let us pray:
O God, in your ineffable providence you were pleased to choose Blessed Joseph to be the spouse of your most holy Mother; grant, we beg you, that we may be worthy to have him for our intercessor in heaven whom on earth we venerate as our protector: You who live and reign forever and ever.
Saint Joseph, pray for us.
On our journey through Lent, Pope Francis encourages us to Fast in this manner:

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* **Fast** from pressures and be prayerful.
* **Fast** from bitterness and fill your hearts with joy.
* **Fast** from selfishness and be compassionate to others.
* **Fast** from grudges and be reconciled.
* **Fast** from words and be silent so you can listen.
Union with God, then, is the spiritual height God calls everyone to achieve — “any one,” not only religious, but “any one” who chooses, who wills to seek this pearl of great price, who specializes in the traffic of eternal goods, who says “yes” constantly to God the Holy Ghost. Witness Catherine of Sienna, the estatic household drudge; and Joan of Arc, the unlettered soldier-heroine, the saviour of her people; Elizabeth of Hungary, the contemplative of a royal court; and countless others — beggars, and peasants, and merchants, and princes. If these out in the world have attained this exalted degree of friendship with God, with what greater reason does He not expect the same of us who are especially consecrated for this one end, no matter what the external form of our service may be.

~ Greater Perfection (p.264-265)

FAVORS REQUESTED

For healing of Brain Cancer (2), Ataxia, Blindness, Lou Gerhig disease, Multiple Sclerosis, Pilonidal cysts.