

Essential books to make the most of the Year of St. Joseph

With the publication and release of his apostolic letter *Patris Corde*, Pope Francis has given the faithful a unique and special opportunity to grow closer to – and in imitation of – the patron of the Church and the family. It is the [Year of St. Joseph](#) from Dec 8, 2020, to Dec. 8, 2021. Although there are many ways to celebrate and make use of this year, there are a multitude of excellent books available to further aid us in this holy pursuit, the “grace of graces” as Pope Francis calls it: our conversion. As we prepare for the feast of St. Joseph the Worker on May 1 – the second of the two feast days on the Church’s calendar dedicated to him – I have listed five of my top suggestions for reading below and included a few honorable mentions worth looking into as well.

[Visit our Year of St. Joseph website here.](#)

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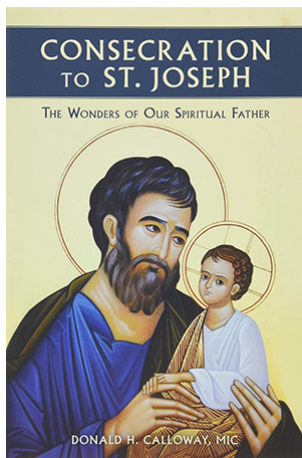
[Patris Corde](#), by Pope Francis



The apostolic letter *Patris Corde* (OSV, \$4.95) from Pope Francis, translated as “With a Father’s Heart,” announces the

Year of St. Joseph. Don't skip this: The letter should be at the top of reading lists for those who wish to follow the Holy Father's call to increased devotion to St. Joseph. Pope Francis emphasizes the spiritual benefits of the imitation of a saint who epitomized the joy of labor, openheartedness to the will of God and a loving devotion to the dignity of fatherhood.

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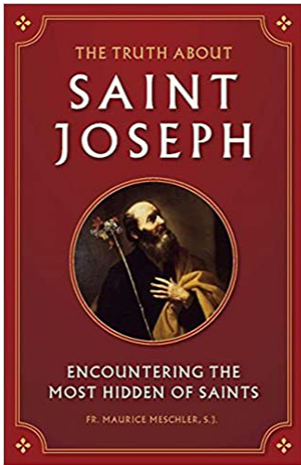


[“Consecration to St. Joseph”](#) by Father Donald Calloway

“Now is the time of St. Joseph” proclaims the author, and I’m not sure there can be a better book to pick up and commit to votive reading than Father Calloway’s “Consecration to St. Joseph: The Wonders of Our Spiritual Father” (Marian Press, \$14.95). A bestseller with high ratings in every domain, and occupying a top spot on my personal bookshelf, this [book is a manual](#) in the same style as the famous “Total Consecration” by St. Louis de Montfort – a title that has changed the lives of countless Catholics through multiple generations. Consecration to St. Joseph is a comprehensive 33-day plan with preparation, readings and prayers woven together with detailed instructions in a three-part guide that is simple but also effective.

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[“The Truth About Saint Joseph”](#) by Father Maurice Meschler

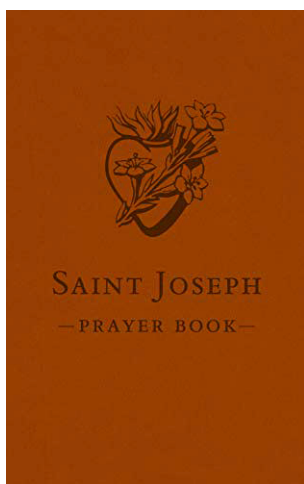


The “father in the shadows” as Pope Francis says in *Patris Corde* is fully visible in this short but filling read from Father Meschler. “The Truth About Saint Joseph: Encountering The Most Hidden of the Saints” (Sophia, \$14.95) is a well-researched and elucidating book. In it, the author from the Society of Jesus unearths surprising facts about the life and person of St. Joseph that enable every believer to better appreciate this chosen father of the Son of God. Readers will discover the importance of his lineage and birth, his daily life and the importance of his actions we witness in sacred Scripture. Better than a historical text, readers are given thoughtful suggestions for their devotion to the saint and acts of imitating his place as a father, laborer and patron of the Church.

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[“The Saint Joseph Prayerbook”](#)

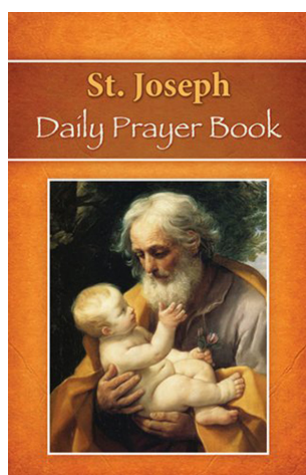


This imitation leather prayer book is an exquisite means of

growing to imitate St. Joseph as the protector patron of the Church and the family through the recitation of devout prayers. "The Saint Joseph Prayerbook" (TAN Books, \$12.95) contains novena for a special favor, the Litany of St. Joseph, a 30-days prayer, a memorare and prayers for a host of intentions, including for purity, conversion, a happy death and much more. "Each of us can discover in Joseph – the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence – an intercessor, a support and a guide in times of trouble," Francis writes in *Patris Corde*. If you're looking for a collection of prayers to use in nearly every circumstance from confession to the Mass – for yourself or as a gift – this beautiful prayer book has it all.

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["St. Joseph Daily Prayer Book"](#)



If you do not already have a daily prayer book for the liturgy of the hours, this one's a sure bet. The "St. Joseph Daily Prayer Book" (Catholic Book Publishing Company, \$6.95) is a straightforward breviary that anyone can pick up and use. Anyone who has collected and prayed more complex Divine Office sets will vouch for the benefits of eliminating complicated tabs, ribbons or inserts. A teenager, brand new convert or lifelong Catholic will be successful and encouraged by this version of the breviary from one of its foremost publishers. The "St. Joseph Daily Prayer Book" is not specifically directed to the life of St. Joseph or any particular devotion

to him, but it makes this list because it is stress-free, effective and will not break the wallet for anyone looking for a great version of the Liturgy of the Hours.

Honorable mentions

There are a few honorable mentions. A great alternative to any of the prayer books listed above is "[Day by Day with Saint Joseph](#)" (Catholic Book Publishing Corp., \$9.95). This is a handy book for a collection of prayers with the addition of meditations to use throughout the year.

[Fatherhood](#) is the most critical component of our reflection this year (isn't it always?). Pope Francis writes: "Being a father entails introducing children to life and reality." And so I encourage parents to read, also, of the many excellent Catholic parenting books available. Two that I keep at arm's reach are "[Don't Let the Culture Raise Your Kids](#)" (OSV, \$18.95) by Marcia Segelstein and "[Parenting with the Beatitudes](#)" (TAN Books, \$16.95) by Jeannie and Ben Ewing for their uniquely helpful take on growing in holiness as a parent. To be sure, there are several other parenting books worth reading during the Year of St. Joseph.



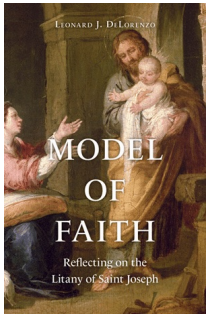
Pope Francis's apostolic letter comes on the 150th anniversary of the [proclamation of St. Joseph as the patron of the universal Church](#). "Our world today needs fathers," proclaims Pope Francis. Sure to make this a universal call over the whole of the faithful, he also clarifies, "In a way, we are all like Joseph" as a shadow that follows the sun: for us, the Son of God. May reading help us in our prayer, and may prayer help us in our lives to be more fatherly: following Christ

closer than ever in this special year.

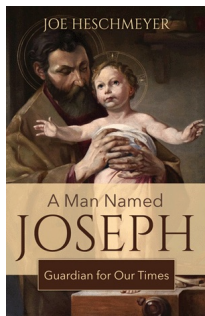
Shaun McAfee writes from Italy.

Additional St. Joseph resources from OSV

Visit the [OSV Catholic Bookstore](#) for these books on St. Joseph.



[“Model of Faith: Reflecting on the Litany of Saint Joseph”](#) (OSV, \$9.95) by Leonard J. DeLorenzo leads readers to consider the many ways that Jesus’ foster-father faithfully and diligently carried out God’s will. DeLorenzo offers a reflection upon one of the 22 names, titles or honors of St. Joseph that we find in the litany. As the litany guides us in proclaiming St. Joseph, “Model of Faith” helps us contemplate the mysteries of God, whom Joseph never fails to praise and serve. As we pray to St. Joseph – offering petitions, contemplating his witness – “Model of Faith” helps draw readers into communion with God, who dwelt in Joseph’s household.



[“A Man Named Joseph: Guardian of Our Times”](#) (OSV, \$14.95) by Joe Heschmeyer begins by diving into an explanation of the papal title, “patron of the universal Church.” Heschmeyer explores what St. Joseph offers the Church and each one of us today. Heschmeyer further dives into what the Bible and early Christian say about St. Joseph as a model husband, father and saint. Each chapter ends with personal reflection and group discussion questions.