

**LENTEN PARISH MISSION: "LENT WITH SAINT JOSEPH"**

Saint Peter Catholic Church • North Saint Paul, Minnesota

February 20-24, 2024

PREACHER: Fr. Peter John Cameron, O.P.

*Wednesday Conference*  
*Saint Joseph-Patron of the Universal Church*

**ST. GREGORY NAZIANZEN:** "The Lord united in Joseph as in a sun whatever light and splendor the other saints possessed."

**FR. HANS URS VON BAL THASAR:** "A time of anxiety and fear precedes it all, and Joseph appears to have been left behind like a useless, antiquated tool. It does little good when a person thinks he is indispensable from the very beginning."

**FR. M.V. BERNADOT, O.P. (+1941):** " At times of desolation, everything is painful--even the thought of graces formerly received. The soul is plunged into a terrible spiritual darkness, even into a condition of terror and anguish. The soul is seized, ravaged, broken, abandoned, and seized again. It is plunged into bitterness and tested by a thousand trials until transformation is complete. It is God himself who is acting in this way in order that *he might attain access to the secret depths of the soul.*"

**ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA:** " Desolation is visited on us so that we are not able to build our nest where we do not belong."

**FR. PAUL DE JAEGHER, S.J. (+1958):** "When we are aware of ourselves as poor, sad, loveless, spiritually numb...when we imagine ourselves to have nothing to offer to God...then, weary with struggling, almost instinctively we turn towards Jesus."

**POPE FRANCIS:** " Just as God told Joseph, *Son of David, do not be afraid!* (Mt 1:20), so he seems to tell us: Do not be afraid! We need to set aside all anger and disappointment, and to embrace the way things are, even when they do not turn out as we wish. Not with mere resignation but with hope and courage. In this way, we become open to a deeper meaning. Our lives can be miraculously reborn if we find the courage to live them in accordance with the Gospel."

**FR. MICHEL GASNIER, O.P.:** "Joseph, because you were pleasing to God, temptation had to try you. Because in the thought of the Most High you were one day to be the hope of the despairing, the one to whom souls crushed by sorrow, plunged in darkness, could turn because you had passed through like temptations endured a like agony. This trial was to prepare you for the role you were to fill in the future."

**CARDINAL RANIERO CANTALAMESSA:** "How often must Joseph- yes, Joseph!-have assured and comforted Mary, telling her she had not sinned, that there was no fault in her, and that she was innocent and had not deceived herself, repeating to her, all told, what he himself

had learned from the angel in a dream: *Do not fear ...that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.* In certain moments, Joseph's role in relation to Mary was similar to the role of a spiritual director, or simply of a good spiritual father in certain cases, that is, to protect and repeat in every crisis the certainty once given him by God, believing and hoping against all evidence."

**FR. JEAN-NICOLAS GROU, S.J. (+1803):** "When a soul has given itself entirely to God, God first of all inspires that soul with the greatest confidence in him, the greatest faith in his words and promises, and the most utter resignation to his guidance; but afterwards God may please to try this confidence in every sort of way, by acting in a manner apparently contrary to all he has said and promised, and by seeming to forsake those who have forsaken all for his sake; by throwing them into a state of such obscurity, of such desolation, of such a strange upheaval of all things, that they no longer know how they stand, and are almost inclined to believe that God intends their ruin. In spite of all this, these souls persevere in the service of God: they relax nothing; they sacrifice one after the other their dearest interests; they hope against hope in the depths of their hearts, that is to say, they hope against all natural reasons for hoping; and by acting in this manner, they glorify God exceedingly and amass an inestimable treasure of merit. So it is in the law of grace with those souls whom God calls to a high state of perfection. He generally begins by unveiling his designs for them; he loads them at first with gifts and favors; and when they think that they are far advanced in his good graces, little by little he withdraws from them: he takes away his gifts; he casts them from one abyss into another; and when he has brought them to a state apparently of utter loss, to an absolute sacrifice of themselves, he raises them up again, and, with the new life which he communicates to them, he gives them an assurance and a foretaste of eternal beatitude."

**POPE FRANCIS:** "The carpenter of Nazareth was able to turn a problem into a possibility by trusting always in divine providence. If at times God seems not to help us, surely this does not mean that we have been abandoned, but instead are being trusted to plan, to be creative, and to find solutions ourselves. Joseph set aside his own ideas in order to accept the course of events and, mysterious as they seemed, to embrace them, take responsibility for them and make them part of his own history."

**FR. JEAN-PIERRE DE CAUSSADE, S.J. (+1751):** "What God arranges for us to experience at each moment is the best and holiest thing that could happen to us. Our faith is never more alive than when what we experience through our senses contradicts and tries to destroy it. The life of faith is the untiring pursuit of God through all that disguises and disfigures him and, as it were, destroys and annihilates him."

**FR. PAUL DE JAEGHER, S.J. (+1958):**

O souls upon whom the "night of the soul" has already descended and who in anguish stumble on towards deliverance and ultimate union: Of you Jesus has asked a blind and unconquerable trust, an eternal trust in him, your ever-faithful friend. He said to you: *Have no fear of either your misery or your powerlessness, for I, I know well how to vanquish them. Even when all seems lost, yet have no fear, for I, I know well how to choose among the many the one path, secret and unknown to you, which, in spite of all, shall lead you to the dazzling peak of love's transformation.*

*Ite ad Josepli!*

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