



## THE POWER OF TRUE FATHERHOOD *Saint Joseph Shadow of the Father and Terror of Demons*

The Church has given St. Joseph the title, 'Terror of Demons.' What is it about this strong, silent, and self-effacing man who worked in wood and stone, that terrorizes demons? We can find our answer, perhaps, in another of his titles, "Patron of the Universal Church." The title patron comes from the Latin *pater* or *patr-* meaning "father."

St. Paul in his letter to the Ephesians tells us that all true fatherhood is a participation in the Fatherhood of God. "And I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Yeshua, the Messiah, Him from whom every fatherhood is named, that is in Heaven and on Earth." Cf. Eph 3: 14-15, Syriac Peshitta New Testament, a 2nd C. Aramaic translation. The Apostle John taught us that God *is* Love and those who abide in love abide in God and God in them Cf. 1Jn. 4:8b. We can, then, conclude that a participation in God's Fatherhood is a participation in Love.

For a current example of the power of true fatherhood in action let's look at a group of fathers in Louisiana. When a series of fights at a Southwood High School resulted in nearly two dozen students getting arrested, suspended or expelled in a span of 72 hours, a group of parents stepped up to help. After one session of brainstorming they formed "Dads on Duty." A group of 40 volunteer dads pledged to take shifts to 'roam the halls' and monitor students'



extracurricular activities. When asked why they decided to step in the group's founder, Michael LaFitte, told CBS News, "We're dads. We decided the best people who can

take care of our kids are who? Are us!"

Each morning 6 to 10 Dads welcome students with smiles and fist bumps. They maintain peace throughout the day with a "perfect mix of tough love

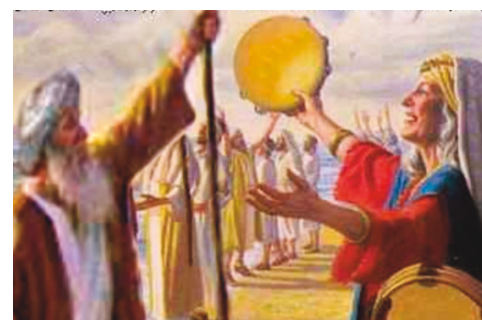


and gentle ribbing that dads do so well." The dads say they will be on duty indefinitely, "Because not everybody has a father figure at home - or a male, period, in their life. So just to be here makes a big difference." cf. Christian Daily 1/20/22

School disorder and subsequent arrests fell to zero. Just the presence of loving Dads curbed student acts of, "hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, and factions." Gal. 5:20b One student even admitted that the fighting immediately stopped upon the arrival of the Dads on Duty, whose presence made them feel safe. Other students said, "People started going to class." "I immediately felt a form of safety." "The school has been happy. You can feel it." A reporter asked, "How can that be?" A girl answered, "You ever heard of a look?" He asked another girl, "Dads have the power to do that?" The answer was, "Yes!" With a laugh she continued, "Not many people know it, but yes." CBS News

Jesus called his Heavenly Father, 'Abba,' Aramaic for daddy. Cf. Jn 11 41-42, Mk 14:36, Mt 6:9 Is the power of *the look* a participation in the *Abba*-hood of God?

When Pharaoh's army hounded God's children, Israel, all the way to the Red Sea, with no escape, they shrunk back in fear. Then the Lord parted the waters of the sea, the Israelites crossed on dry land. Pharaoh's chariots followed them



into the midst of the sea and "the Lord *looked* down from a column of fiery cloud upon the Egyptian army and threw it into a panic;" Ex 14:24. With mere glance God, our Abba-Father, ended the threat of violence. The Israelites were overjoyed to find



themselves in a place of safety and peace just as the students of Southwood H.S. do today.

In his novel about Saint Joseph, *The Shadow of the Father*, Polish author Jan Dobraczynski, (1910-1994) inspired by Psalm 91:1, portrays Joseph as the “shadow of the Almighty” for Jesus and Mary. By definition, a shadow is a shade, comfort, protection, and defense. Cf. Webster’s Dictionary In *Psalm 91* we discover that for those who trust in God the ‘shadow of the Almighty’ is a protection from all types of evil. “He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High and abides in the shadow of the Almighty, will be delivered from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence, the terror of the night and the arrow that flies by day.” C Ps. 91:1 ff

Do we get a glimpse of Joseph as the strong, silent Shadow when he and Mary find Jesus in the Temple after searching ‘with great anxiety’ for three days? Can we suppose that, as husbands often will, Joseph stood by Mary’s side in silent support as she

exclaimed to her son, as only a mother can, “Why have you done this to us!?” And Jesus answered, “Why were you looking for me? Did not you know that I must be in my Father’s house?” Did Joseph, the Father’s Shadow chosen by him to raise his son, silently communicate to Jesus, with a typical fatherly look, “Not yet son. For now, just come home.”? Scripture tells us only that, “Jesus went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them.” Lk. 2: 51-52a Under Joseph’s eye the boy grew in ‘wisdom, stature and favor.’ As a son in manly formation, it would be from his earthly father that Jesus: would learn the Law of God by word and example; would pray with the men in the Synagogue; would become a Carpenter. Cf. Apostolic Exhortation, REDEMPTORIS CUSTOS, St. John Paul II. 1989



Msgr. Rossetti, exorcist for the Archdiocese of Washington, asserts, “I believe that devotion to St.

Joseph is part of God’s plan to assist us in these dark times. St. Joseph is the model of human fatherhood.” NCR ibid



The 92-year-old retired priest and exorcist in Scranton, PA, Msgr. John Esseff, after calling on Saint Joseph many times, reflected that when God looked for someone to be like him, it was Joseph whom he placed at the head of the Holy Family. And Jesus called

Joseph ‘Abba.’ NCR.com March 19, 2021.

This explains why “I call on St. Joseph very much during exorcisms. The demons are terrified of him. One of the things that I have found in talking with people is that the biggest wound is the father-wound,” he said. “All of us are being called to look to St. Joseph, not only as the Terror of Demons, but as a father figure. We need an earthly father who will show us again what a real dad is like.” NCR ibid

Strong, silent, self-effacing Saint Joseph terrorizes demons simply because he exemplifies true fatherhood. Every loving man, who embraces the role of a *real dad*, can be a ‘shadow’ for a child and, by his look, can stop misbehavior or even violence in its tracks. But at the mere threat of St. Joseph’s *look*, demons flee in terror because he is the ‘Shadow of Love Himself,’ our Eternal Father.



In Montreal, Quebec, CA at St. Joseph’s Oratory *The Votive Chapel* with 10,000 candles, is a corridor of votive altars each being a tribute to Joseph: above is ‘The Terror of Demons.’

## A RENEWED SPACE FOR THE HOLY PREACHING

*How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!* Romans 10:15b



Our old floor was worn smooth where nuns had stood chanting the Good News since 1966. Originally our choir stalls faced the altar, the focus of the architect being our ministry of Perpetual Adoration. Over the years, we debated returning to the medieval monastic tradition of ‘choir to choir’ seating, and considered changing the design of our stalls and the orientation for our Choir.

We finally decided to keep our existing stalls, turn them around and eventually get them refurbished. But, alas, the old floor was no longer as beautiful as the faithful feet that left indentation everywhere they stood. So, we had a new wood-like floor installed that has created a lovely and warm worship space.

Once again, as in our original Monastery in Detroit, we have choir stalls that face inward on either side of the center aisle so that the two choirs can chant alternate strophes of psalms and canticles. And true to our charism as Nuns of the Order of Preachers, by proclaiming of the Good News to one another in the Divine Office, we become a ‘holy preaching.’



Sisters' choir 1966





**A SWORD FOR THE LORD**  
*A little girls prayer becomes her life vocation*

My Dad, who was head altar boy until he turned twenty-one, taught me to love Jesus in the Eucharist. Holy Thursday with its procession became a very special night for him as he walked backward incensing the Blessed Sacrament on the way to the Altar of Repose.

When I was six I stood before that Altar in my parish church. Two Knights of Columbus with drawn swords were guarding the Tabernacle. My Dad had taught me that, on Holy Thursday night, Jesus in the tabernacle of the Altar of Repose was Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Moved with the love and compassion of a small child I prayed, "Jesus, when I grow up I want a sword to fight for you, so that the bad men can't hurt you again."

Over twenty years later the sword that I had prayed for pierced *my* heart. While praying with the Scriptures one phrase seemed to speak to me directly. "Go therefore and preach." My whole being knew that the thrust of that word threatened to change my life, forever. I prayed, "No, don't ask that!" Ask what? Down deep I knew it was a call. Pope St. John Paul II described it when he said, "In the hidden recesses of the human heart the grace of a vocation, a *vocare* or call, takes the form of a dialogue. It is a dialogue between Christ and an individual, in which a personal invitation is given." Pope St. John Paul II, Angelusmessage, Dec. 14, 1980

'Go and preach.' But where? And how? My search led me into Charismatic Renewal. Then drew me to a Community of prayer and evangelization. In a life saturated with Scripture, I found my sword. St Paul wrote in Ephesians, "the sword of the Spirit, is the word of God." Eph. 6:17 Literally, "the *gladius* of the



Spirit is the *rhema* of God."

The Roman *gladius* was a very sharp pointed, two-edged sword with an 18" blade. It was light weight and could be maneuvered quickly and with ease with one hand allowing a soldier to defend himself with a shield in the other. St. Paul used *rhema* not *logos* to describe this sword. He chose not *logos* the written word of God nor Logos, the Incarnate Word, but *rhema* a living word.

The author of Hebrews tells us, "the *rhema* of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart." Heb. 4:12 That is exactly what happened to me when I read, "Go therefore and preach."

That word continued to vibrate in my heart. What to do? An eight-day guided retreat concluded with my Retreat Director's assessment, "You have a contemplative vocation." Next my Spiritual Director said, "Go to the Monastery of Dominican Nuns for a weekend." Finally, my heart was at peace. The Dominican Order is the Order of Preachers!

The friars, sisters and laity of the Order are "to preach the name of our Lord Jesus Christ throughout the world; the nuns are to seek, ponder and call upon him in solitude so that the word proceeding from the mouth of God may not return to him empty, but may accomplish those things for which it was sent." Constitutions of the Nuns - LCM



As the Nuns pray individual statements, promises, and truths of Scripture, like a *gladius*, are thrust into the weak spots of her enemies. Just as, when tempted by Satan in the desert, Jesus used the Divine Word to defend himself and defeat his attacker.

However, unlike the Roman *gladius*, the Lord's thrust of a *rhema* can be life giving, even life changing. The Psalms, Canticles and Scriptures of the Divine Office have the power to encourage, instruct, or correct according to 'God's eternal purpose.' They might even prepare a heart to hear 'Go, therefore and Preach.'

*The Sword of the Spirit  
is  
the Word of God*

Eph. 6:17

As a Dominican Nun I became a woman, 'free for God alone,' like those St. Dominic associated with his "holy preaching" by prayer and penance." Cf. Fundamental Constitution of the Nuns, 1, 1 But, how could I, as a Cloistered Nun, use a sword to fight for Jesus?

The answer to this question, I believe, can be found in the Nuns' Choir during the Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours. The place where the preaching of the nuns and the word of God join forces. "In the liturgy the mystery of salvation is present and at work, especially in the Eucharist... Appointed for the work of divine praise, the nuns, in union with Christ, glorify God for the eternal purpose of his will and the marvelous dispensation of grace." LCM 75

As contemplatives, the nuns seek, ponder and call upon Jesus in solitude so that the word, *rhema*, proceeding from the mouth of God may not return to him empty, but may accomplish those things for which it was sent. Hence, as the nuns gaze lovingly at the Word, the written words *logoi* of the Divine Office become living and active, *rhema*.

These living words go forth to fight for the members of the Body of Christ, his Church.

**PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE**  
*Sacred Reading: Lectio Divina*

**Read/Lectio**

Read the passage slowly. S l o o o w l y.  
 Then reread the passage it.  
 Listen with your heart for the word to speak.  
*Let the world slip away and make room for God's presence.*

**Reflect or ruminare/Meditatio**

Gently read the passage again.  
 Ponder your word. Ruminare. Sit with this word and chew on it over and over as a cow chews its cud to get all the goodness out of her food.

**Respond or pray/Oratio**

Read the passage one last time.  
 Prayer is a dialogue: Tell the Lord what the scripture said to you. Ask him a question. Express a need.  
 Pray however you are led by grace to pray.

**Rest/Contemplatio**

Gaze gently on the Truth spoken by your word or simply be with God.  
 Contemplation differs from meditation. It is not thinking, rather it is being present to the Presence of God..

**Resolve - contemplation in action/Operatio**

Share what you have contemplated in words or in the way you act and serve others.



## FARMINGTON HILLS HIGHLIGHTS



Sr. Mary Magdalen in the midst of our community. Sister celebrated 100 years of life on Nov. 15, 2021 and was blessed by many flowers and notes from our benefactors. Sr. Mary Joseph of the Precious Blood the white veiled Novice made First Profession on 2-2-22. Her story will be in the next Echoes.



In 2021 we were grateful to receive Fr. Louis Marrone, OP as Vicar. Thank you, Father.



On Saturday Nov. 20<sup>th</sup>, we hosted the Diocese of Lansing Nun Run , Sr. Dominic Marie, welcomed over twenty enthusiastic young women. Several of them expressed interest in a Discernment Retreat.



Openlight Media, a digital platform ministry of the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist, came with film crew to produce, for us, a vocation video. Above is the 'hot seat' in front of a huge light where a few sisters sat to tell the story of the Lord's call and their journey to the Monastery.

*"When I found Him Whom my heart loves  
... I would not let him go!"*

Song of songs

July 22-23<sup>rd</sup> 2022  
Discernment Retreat

*Presented by our Vocation team  
with Fr. Nick Monco, OP.*

Single, Catholic women ages 18 to 35

Please, spread the news and  
pray for those the Lord is inviting.

Contact: Vocation Directress at [dnfvocations@gmail.com](mailto:dnfvocations@gmail.com)

## HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

APRIL 14<sup>TH</sup>- 17<sup>TH</sup>



<b>HOLY THURSDAY</b>	<b>4:00 pm</b> MASS; Doors open 8:00 am; Gift Shop closes 2:30 pm
<b>GOOD FRIDAY</b>	<b>3:00 pm</b> Veneration of the Cross with Communion Service Doors open 8:00 am; Gift Shop Closed All Day
<b>HOLY SATURDAY</b>	<b>8:00 am</b> Doors open until 2:30 pm; Gift Shop open until 2:30 pm
<b>EASTER -</b>	
<b>VIGIL MASS</b>	<b>11:00 pm</b> Doors open 10:45 pm
<b>MORNING MASS</b>	<b>9:30 am</b> Doors open at 9:00 am and close at Noon

Intentions: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please check here if no  
acknowledgment needed*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2021 SWEEPSTAKES WINNERS

Shortly after Mass on Thanksgiving Day, 2021, Our Prioress, Sister Mary Peter, assisted by Sr. Mary Thomas who drew the winning tickets for the Sweepstakes Winners.

The winners were :

*First Prize* of \$1,000.00: Fadia Kouza Keego Harbor, MI

*Second Prize* of \$500.00: Ann Caruso Redford, MI

The five *Third Prize* winners of \$100.00 were:

Ban Gappy	Farmington Hills, MI
Marilyn Heath	Kalamazoo, MI
Mark Nagy	Riverview, MI
Ruth Petrucci	Des Plaines, IL
Anita Thoms	Jackson, LA

We rejoice with these winners, and we offer our sincere thanks to them and to all who so graciously partook of the sweepstakes.

We ask our dear Lord to bless a hundredfold the generosity of one and all.

The total amount that was donated was \$21,320.00.





**WEB ADDRESS: [www.opnuns-fh.org](http://www.opnuns-fh.org)  
Donate on-line via PayPal or "Givng"  
Prayer Line: 248-626-8253**



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Please, donate on-line by going to [www.opnuns-fh.org](http://www.opnuns-fh.org), click on **Giving Tab** - And please consider remembering us in your will.

### NOVENA OF SAINT JOSEPH ~ MARCH 11<sup>TH</sup>~ 19<sup>TH</sup>

*St. Joseph, man of prayer, help us to stand with you before God, humble, attentive, faith-filled, awaiting the loving mercy of His providence. Teach us to pray as you did, with the inner simplicity and trust of silent prayer and the purity and strength of worship in union with our brothers and sisters.*

*The whole world is your child, Joseph.*

*Be protector and advocate for the searching and the sorrowing, the struggling and the straying, for all of us who long for peace and the fullness of life.*

*Take our lives, our times, our needs into your fatherly care, so that we may follow Christ Jesus down pathways of holiness and wholeness. Enfold us and those we love in your prayer, father Joseph.*

*Obtain for us the daily bread of grace we need for this life, so that we may come at last in your company to the eternal joy of Heaven. Amen.*

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