



Plenary Indulgence Options for the “Year of St. Joseph”

+ December 8, 2020 through December 8, 2021 +

The Apostolic Penitentiary of the Vatican, which is the dicastery of the Roman Curia that oversees the practice of Indulgences, has issued a Decree granting different options to gain a Plenary Indulgence for the “Year of St. Joseph” that was proclaimed by Pope Francis on December 8, 2020 - the *Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception*. The special Year in honor of the Guardian of the Redeemer will last from December 8, 2020 through December 8, 2021 and has been announced in honor of the 150th Anniversary of Pope Pius IX’s proclamation in 1870 of St. Joseph as the “Patron of the Universal Church” (*Quemadmodum Deus*).

Conditions for the Plenary Indulgence

According to the Vatican Decree, the Plenary Indulgence is granted to the faithful under the three *usual conditions*. The three usual conditions for receiving a Plenary Indulgence are Sacramental Confession (which, under the “usual conditions,” means going to Confession within 20 days *before* or within 20 days *after* the day the Plenary Indulgence is sought); also, the reception of Eucharistic Communion on the day the Plenary Indulgence is sought; and prayer for the Pope’s needs and intentions on the day the Plenary Indulgence is sought (which, under the “usual conditions” is understood to be an *Our Father* and *Hail Mary*; or, one may also recite the *Creed*). Also required is a spirit that is sincerely and willfully detached from any sin, mortal and venial. Those who fulfill these conditions can participate in the varying Plenary Indulgence options during the “Year of St. Joseph” on the following occasions and manners indicated by the Apostolic Penitentiary:

Plenary Indulgence Options

- The Plenary Indulgence is granted to those who will meditate for at least 30 minutes on the Lord’s Prayer (the Our Father), or take part in a Spiritual Retreat of at least one day that includes a meditation on St. Joseph. “St. Joseph, an authentic man of faith, invites us”, the Decree reads, “to rediscover our filial relationship with the Father, to renew fidelity to prayer, (and) to listen and correspond with profound discernment to God’s will.”
- The Plenary Indulgence can also be obtained by those who, following St. Joseph’s example, will perform a Spiritual or Corporal Work of Mercy. St. Joseph “encourages us to rediscover the value of silence, prudence, and loyalty in carrying out our duties,” the Decree notes.
- The prayerful recitation of the Holy Rosary in families and among engaged couples is another way of obtaining the Plenary Indulgence, in order that “all Christian families may be stimulated to recreate the same atmosphere of intimate communion, love, and prayer that was in the Holy Family” of Nazareth.