

### **Consecration to St Joseph**

We come to you, Holy Joseph,  
with our hearts full of Confidence,  
knowing that you are a true Father to us,  
the Shadow of God the Father,  
our protector in times of danger  
when we are afraid.

You Are the Son of David,  
you Are the Man of Justice,  
you are the harbinger of Peace,  
you have been made father to the King.  
Humble in your authority,  
Bold in your decisions,  
Merciful in your actions,  
you heeded the voice of the Angel,  
and your heart beats with the heart of the Father.  
In humility you became the husband  
of Mary ever Virgin,  
and though overwhelmed at the  
realization of the Incarnation,  
you accepted the Angel's words  
and did not withdraw from  
the mysterious workings of Divine Providence.

You accepted the role of being  
the putative father of Jesus,  
the Son of the Eternal Father.

Vessel of Obedience to God,  
you were also obedient to earthly powers,  
and so when Augustus Caesar  
commanded that all must take part  
in the Universal Census, you obeyed, and with  
Mary went to your ancestral town of Bethlehem.

As Pilgrims,  
you and Mary journeyed with God  
to adore God in the Stable.  
You took God to his own,  
and they knew him not.  
The doors of Bethlehem were closed  
to their Saviour,  
harsh words were uttered  
against the parents of the Messiah,  
cold hearts had no room for the infant King,  
no place for God in any inn.

Virgin father of the King of Kings,  
you found a welcome habitation in the stable.  
The Ox and the Ass gave welcome  
to the birth of Christ the Saviour,  
and your exquisite tact and courtesy  
protected Mary's modesty, at the moment when  
God the Son was born into the World.

When the shepherds came to adore the King,  
you welcomed them with kindness,  
when the Magi came with their precious gifts,  
you welcomed them with reverence,  
and when they worshipped the infant King,  
your heart sang with joy,  
and the angels harmonized your song.  
Against the malice of Herod's  
murderous hatred of Jesus,  
you came with the power of an angel,  
and under the cover of night,  
you wrapped Mary and Jesus  
in the robe of your strength.

In exile in Egypt, like Joseph the Patriarch,  
you preserved not only a people,  
but the infant Church,  
and your unflagging spirits consoled Mary  
and your Son,  
who felt the sorrow of being  
strangers in an alien land.

Again the angel spoke to you and  
told you to hasten back to your homeland,  
and prudence directed you to return to Nazareth,  
and so avoid the wiles of yet another evil king.

In Nazareth you taught Jesus  
the Creator of Heaven and Earth  
the art and trade of carpentry.  
God was your apprentice and you his disciple.  
In that home where Mary was Queen,  
your Son the King,  
you, as the shadow of the Father,  
were Lord of the home.

O astonishing mystery  
that Mary the Immaculate Mother of God,  
Spouse of the Spirit,  
and Daughter of the Father,  
should be subject to you,  
but greater still is the mystery that Jesus Christ,  
God Incarnate,  
should call you Father and obey you.

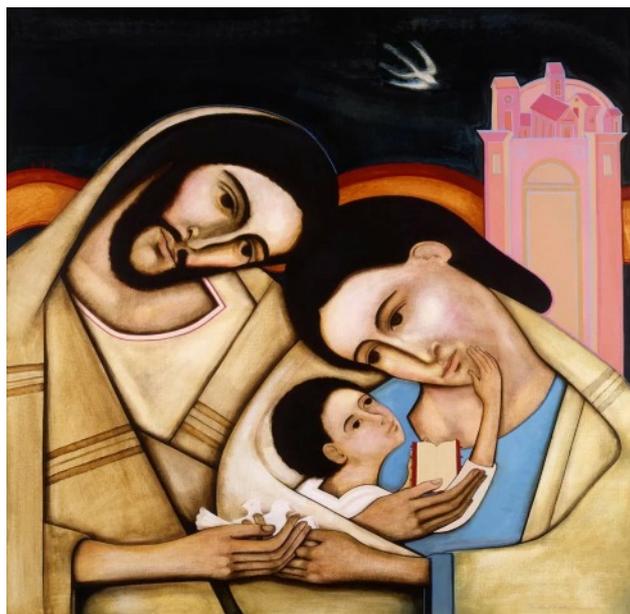
Miracle of Grace, humility of God,  
that the Trinity called you to be  
the Chaste Spouse of Mary,  
and gave to you the honour  
of naming the Incarnate Word 'Jesus'.  
To you was given the honour  
of marking Jesus by circumcision,  
and so inscribing him as a Son of Abraham.  
To you was given the dignity  
of presenting Jesus in the Temple,  
and experiencing both the joy  
and the distress of Simeon's prophecy,  
and you felt that sword that pierced Mary's heart,  
when you, the head of the Holy Family,  
lost Jesus for three days,  
and so felt in your heart the indescribable sorrow  
of the passion,  
which your beloved Spouse would feel,  
when she stood at the Cross of her Son.  
In your sorrow at the loss of Jesus,  
you encourage us when we have fallen,  
and in your joy at the discovery  
of Him in the Temple,  
you share your joy with us,  
when we are forgiven in the  
great sacrament of penance.

As your life drew to a close,  
your heart longed for the mansions of Heaven,  
and the splendour of your Father's House.  
As your body began to fail,  
your spirit began to sing a song  
of gratitude and praise,  
and the angels gathered around you  
for your final journey,  
to the bosom of God the Father Almighty.  
Though you could not enter His Courts  
until His Son had broken the gates of  
Sin and Death,  
you would still be able to nestle  
under the shadow of the Father's wings  
and be carried to his Everlasting Arms.  
Supported by Jesus and Mary,  
you ended your earthly journey  
in the glory of a life lived in the  
mercy and justice of the Father,  
whom you resembled to a truly remarkable degree.

Sinners though we are,  
and overwhelmed by our numberless sins,  
and manifold iniquities,  
we flee to your protection  
and under the cloak of Your righteousness,  
and in the recesses of your noble heart,  
we consecrate ourselves to you this day.

May we resolve to serve Jesus and Mary  
as you served them,  
to suffer for them as you suffered,  
and in so doing bring many to salvation  
and the Halls of Eternal Peace.

And finally, when our lives draw to a close,  
may we on the arms of Jesus and Mary,  
be welcomed into eternity,  
hear the Father's voice,  
feel the Divine love of his Eternal Embrace,  
and in the light of the All-knowing,  
light filled Trinity,  
see the Majesty of his Glorious Face.  
Amen!



Holy Family : Michael O'Brien