

The School of Nazareth

A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY
WITH ST. JOSEPH



Mark Hartfiel

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By Mark Hartfiel

SAMPLE

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For my wife Katie, and my daughters Maria, Clare and Lucy

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DAY 1

Chosen

*From all generations
From all peoples,
From all men,
Joseph was chosen.*

From the moment of the fall of Adam and Eve, humanity awaited a Savior. Expectations grew over thousands of years while all of creation held its breath anticipating salvation. Of course, God's imagination is capable of constructing an infinite number of ways to manifest his love for us. He could have come in a magnificent fashion, blinding the world with his infinite glory that we may begin to see clearly again. If I were God, that's how I would have done it! Instead, he made the radical choice to leave his throne in the heavens and break into human history over 2,000 years ago as an infant, placing himself in the care of a mere man and woman. God the Father entrusted God the Son to two humans, Mary and Joseph. He became dependent upon their "Yes" and upon their love and protection to accomplish his most beautiful plan for our salvation.

God did not **need** Mary and Joseph, but in his unfathomable wisdom and providence, he **chose** them to play an essential role, as he carried out his divine plan. God chose to rely upon them for the care of his only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. He has chosen St. Joseph for us as well. In the next thirty days, you will discover the father and model that desires an invitation into your home and family.

Personal Reflection:

Each day, we will explore an aspect of St. Joseph and follow with a personal reflection to relate this to our own lives. The personal reflection is intended to be a spiritual challenge to help us examine our current lives and lead us into deeper communion with God. As we "look in the mirror" a bit, we may feel uncomfortable. You may feel tempted at times to say to yourself, "I'm not that holy,

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I don't have heroic virtue and trust, and I don't even know what mission God has given to me." Self-reflection and examination of your own spiritual life is of great value if you want to grow in your faith. Place your hope in the Lord and never despair of your weakness or sinfulness.

God doesn't choose the qualified, he qualifies the chosen. And God is calling you.

*From all generations,
From all peoples,
From all men,
You have been chosen.*

He has chosen **you** for your wife. He has chosen **you** for your children. He has chosen **you** for your family. He has chosen **you** for your vocation. He could have done things in a different way, but instead he chose to rely upon **your** faith, **your** trust and **your** love. He chose **you** to play an integral role in the salvation of those in your care. You have an incredible dignity and responsibility before you.

You see, our God is as intimate as he is infinite. God understands your situation. He knows what you are going through. He understands the crosses that you carry in your life and the ins and outs of your relationships. Whether you are married or single, he understands your struggles, **and within them he has an incredible plan for you and you alone.** There may be times when those plans are confusing and you might ask if God picked the right man for the job. Just as God handpicked a carpenter for a singular role in the history of the world, God is calling you... and he is calling for a reason. In the words of St. Francis of Assisi, "Your life may be the only sermon some people hear today." He is calling you in your home, in your workplace, in your daily tasks. He will call, and he will qualify.

Mary said Yes.

Joseph said Yes.

What do you say?

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Heavenly Father, as I begin this journey, give me the faith and trust I need to follow you. Give me the courage to say “Yes” to you today and everyday of my life.

St. Joseph – illuminate the darkness that shrouds your life. Pierce the silence that hides your wisdom. Amen.

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