



## DIOCESE OF ST. PETERSBURG

Office of the Bishop

December 10, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On Tuesday, as our Church celebrated the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a communication was sent from the USCCB announcing that **Pope Francis has granted a plenary indulgence to anyone who celebrates the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe at home, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.**

This plenary indulgence will be granted on December 11 and 12, 2020, under the following conditions:

1. Prepare an altar or place of prayer to Our Lady of Guadalupe in your home.
2. Participate through the media at one of the Masses offered at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City (12:00 a.m. or 12:00 p.m. on December 12), actively participating in the Holy Eucharist as you would in person, that is, with devotion and with exclusive attention to the Eucharist. You can access the Masses via the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/user/BasilicadeGuadalupe>. If you prefer to participate virtually in one of the Masses for the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe offered at another parish or shrine, this is also permissible.
3. In addition, comply with the usual conditions to benefit from indulgences: A.) Pray for the intentions of the Holy Father, B.) Be in a state of grace after received sacramental confession, C) Attend a full Mass, and D) Receive Communion. The last three conditions can be fulfilled when public health guidance allows.

In addition, yesterday, Pope Francis also released the Apostolic Letter, *Patris corde* (“With a Father’s Heart”), in which he recalled the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the declaration of Saint Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church. To mark the occasion, **the Holy Father has proclaimed a “Year of Saint Joseph” from December 8, 2020 to December 8, 2021.** A link to the Apostolic Letter is included [here](#).

Upon the announcement of the Year of Saint Joseph, the Apostolic Penitentiary also issued a decree granting plenary indulgences to all Christian faithful during the same period.

The plenary indulgence is granted to the faithful under the usual conditions (sacramental confession, Eucharistic Communion, and prayer for the Pope’s intentions) to Christians who, with a spirit detached from any sin, participate in the Year of St. Joseph on these occasions and manners indicated by the Apostolic Penitentiary:

The plenary indulgence is granted to those who will meditate for at least 30 minutes on the Lord's Prayer or take part in a Spiritual Retreat of at least one day that includes a meditation on St. Joseph.

1. The 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.
2. Reciting the Holy Rosary in families and among engaged couples is another way of obtaining indulgences, 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."
3. Everyone who entrusts their daily activity to the protection of St. Joseph, and every faithful who invokes the intercession of St. Joseph so that those seeking work can find dignifying work can also obtain the plenary indulgence.
4. The plenary indulgence is also granted to the faithful who will recite the Litany to St. Joseph or any other prayer to St. Joseph proper to the other liturgical traditions, for the persecuted Church and for the relief of all Christians suffering all forms of persecution. Because, the decree notes, "the flight of the Holy Family to Egypt shows us that God is there where man is in danger, where man suffers, where he runs away, where he experiences rejection and abandonment."

In the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, an indulgence is described as "A remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven, which the faithful Christian who is duly disposed gains under certain prescribed conditions through the action of the Church which, as the minister of redemption, dispenses and applies with authority the treasury of the satisfactions of Christ and the saints. An indulgence is partial or plenary [full] according as it removes either part or all of the temporal punishment due to sin" (CCC 1471).

May these opportunities for prayer and reflection bring you and your loved ones ever closer to Christ, whose birth we recall especially at Christmas and whose second coming we joyfully await. Marana tha! Come, Lord Jesus!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

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Most Reverend Gregory Parkes  
Bishop of St. Petersburg