

## Seven Sundays Devotion: Prayers in Honor of the Seven Sorrows and Seven Joys of St. Joseph

composed by Blessed Gennario Sarnelli, C.S.S.R. (d. 1744)\*

*The Seven Sundays Devotion developed after St. Joseph appeared to a couple of friars who were aboard a ship that sank off the coast of Flanders sometime before the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. They managed to stay afloat for three days, all the while praying for help. Because they had always been devoted to St. Joseph, they continuously asked him to save them. On the third day, a man appeared to them, quite radiant, and told them to have faith and trust in St. Joseph. They listened. The man rescued them, getting them safely ashore. Once on land the friars asked him who he was and how could they thank him or what honor they could they pay him. He identified himself as Joseph. He told them that if they wanted to honor him, daily recite the Our Father and Hail Mary seven times while meditating on his Seven Sorrows and Seven Joys during his life with Jesus and Mary. The account was recorded in the 16<sup>th</sup> century by Father John da Fano, a Capuchin, in a little work he wrote about devotion to St. Joseph. It spread in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century when Redemptorist Father Gennaro Sarnelli (beatified by St. John Paul II in 1996) put together the official prayer--meditations to go along with the seven Our Fathers and Hail Marys. As the devotion spread, popes approved and promoted it by attaching indulgences to this powerful devotional prayer, including Blessed Pius IX.\*\**

### Third Sunday, February 19, 2023

**Third Sorrow:** The Circumcision. (Luke 2:21)

***And when eight days were fulfilled for His circumcision, His name was called Jesus, the name given to Him by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.***

**Third Joy:** The Holy Name of Jesus. (Matt 1:25)

***And he did not know her until she brought forth her first born son. And he called His name Jesus.***

**O** glorious St. Joseph you faithfully obeyed the law of God, and your heart was pierced at the sight of the Precious Blood that was shed by the Infant Savior during His Circumcision, but the Name of Jesus gave you new life and filled you with quiet joy.

By this sorrow and this joy, obtain for us the grace to be freed from all sin during life, and to die rejoicing, with the holy Name of Jesus in our hearts and on our lips.

*Our Father . . . . Hail Mary . . . . Glory be . . . .*

---

\*The Seven Sundays in honor of St. Joseph are observed by receiving Holy Communion in his honor on seven consecutive Sundays, and on each Sunday the prayers in honor of the Seven Sorrows and the Seven Joys of St. Joseph are recited. This devotion may be practiced at any time of the year, but especially on the seven Sundays preceding his solemnity on March 20<sup>th</sup>.

\*\*Based on "It's Time to Start the Seven Sundays Devotion to St. Joseph," *National Catholic Register*, <https://www.ncregister.com/blog/saint-joseph-seven-sundays>, Joseph Pronechen, January 28, 2021.