

SAMPLE ACTIVITY

A Spiritual Bouquet to St. Joseph, Patron of Fathers

Father's Day provides a beautiful opportunity to pray for and honor fathers. However, it can also be a difficult holiday for some, such as those who have lost their own father, those who have lost a child, and those who are struggling to have a child.

This activity seeks to lift up the many intentions brought to our hearts by the observance of Father's Day, entrusting them to the intercession of St. Joseph, Patron of Fathers. It also provides a way to honor St. Joseph for his own example of embracing the call to fatherhood amid difficult circumstances. Despite all obstacles, he was faithful, welcoming the life of the Christ Child and offering care and protection to both Mary and Jesus.

On the weekend of Father's Day, parishioners are invited to write a prayer intention on a slip of paper and place it, along with a flower if possible, beneath a statue, icon, or image of St. Joseph. (If you don't have one, you could look for an image online to print or temporarily display on a screen.)

When the activity is complete, you will have a spiritual and physical "bouquet" of prayer intentions and offerings serving as a visual reminder of the powerful intercession and protection of St. Joseph.

While the following directions describe completing this activity within a parish, this can be easily adapted for use in a school, ministry, or family. Some adaptation ideas are included in the following pages.

Materials:

- ◆ *Flowers of various varieties (inexpensive options often include carnations, daisies, and alstroemeria, among others)
- ◆ Buckets to store the flowers in water
- ◆ Small note cards or slips of paper
- ◆ Pens, crayons, or markers
- ◆ Vases of water
- ◆ Basket to hold prayer intentions
- ◆ Designated statue, icon, or image of the St. Joseph
- ◆ Copies of a prayer seeking St. Joseph's intercession, such as the [*Prayer to St. Joseph after the Rosary*](#) or a [*Litany of St. Joseph*](#)

Directions:

1. Use the included sample bulletin announcement the weekend before Father's Day to invite parishioners to participate in the upcoming activity. (Be sure to submit your bulletin announcement request well in advance to ensure space is available in the bulletin.)
2. Gather your materials. Flowers can often be obtained in bulk through a local wholesale florist or wholesale chain. Your parish may have already established connections due to ordering flowers throughout the year. The size of your parish, school, or community will determine how many flowers you need to purchase. To help keep needed quantities lower, ask that each participant use only one flower. You could also consider asking parishioners to bring their own flowers, perhaps supplying only a small number (if any) for those who forget to do so.
3. Pre-cut notecards or small slips of paper.

**If your parish or community is unable to afford flowers, this activity can still be completed without them! Simply have parishioners place their written intentions in a basket before the designated statue of St. Joseph. Or, you could consider providing crayons or markers and suggesting participants draw a flower next to their intention. This adaptation cuts costs and encourages participants' creativity! Another option would be to invite parishioners to bring their own flowers. If you do have some access to flowers or money for them, you could provide a limited number on a "first come, first serve" basis for those who forget to bring one.*

4. Place the basket for the intentions and the vases filled with water near the statue, icon, or painting of St. Joseph that will serve as the center of the spiritual bouquet.
5. Set up a separate table outside the church or in the vestibule (with the necessary permission obtained). Place the pens and slips of paper on the table. Set the flowers in buckets of water to the sides of the table or behind it. If there is room on the table, provide copies of a prayer to St. Joseph for participants to pray together before the image or to take home with them to pray. (Some options are this [Litany of St. Joseph](#) or [the Rosary](#), followed by the [Prayer to St. Joseph after the Rosary](#).) Or, you could print the prayer of your choice directly into the bulletin. In addition to saving space on the table, parishioners can use the prayer to seek the intercession of St. Joseph throughout the month. (The prayers can be found at respectlife.org/action-guides.)
6. At the end of each Mass, use one of the sample pulpit announcements to invite parishioners to participate in the spiritual bouquet.
7. Arrange for volunteers to staff the table following each Mass. They can help pass out materials, answer questions, and assist younger participants in writing their intention. Direct participants to where they can present their intentions and flowers to St. Joseph.
8. Your bouquet should grow physically and spiritually after each Mass. Allow the flowers to remain for next week or two to serve as a reminder of the intentions entrusted to the intercession of St. Joseph and in thanksgiving for his fatherly care. Encourage parishioners to also pray for the intercessions of other participants.

Ideas for Parish Adaptations

Because each parish varies widely, you may need to adapt or change this activity to fit your specific needs. Think about the layout of your church building, the location of an appropriate image of St. Joseph, the schedule of Masses, and any other factors that may affect or be affected by this activity.

For example, depending on the space available in your parish vestibule, you may want to conduct the activity outside to help with the flow of foot traffic after Mass. If your parish has a St. Joseph statue outside, consider offering the spiritual bouquet there. This will eliminate the need for parishioners to exit and re-enter the Church. Some parishes have Masses scheduled very close together, so moving outside can also help ensure the next Mass is not disrupted or delayed.

You might ask participants to form a line to present their prayer intentions and flowers to St. Joseph one by one. Or, you could encourage people to pray a moment before approaching and let the foot traffic flow organically.

The purpose of this activity is to seek the intercession of St. Joseph for all the intentions brought to our hearts by the observance of Father's Day, as well as to thank him for his fatherly love for us. Assess what works best for your circumstances, and make adaptations or changes as needed.

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Sample Announcements for At-Home Modification

◆ Bulletin Announcement

(Suggested Weekends: The two weekends before Father's Day)

This Father's Day weekend, we invite you to join us in offering a spiritual bouquet to St. Joseph, seeking his intercession and thanking him for his fatherly care. We invite you to share with us your prayer intentions to be entrusted to St. Joseph. We also encourage you to offer a spiritual bouquet to St. Joseph in your own homes, using or adapting the suggestions in this sample activity guide: usccb.org/joseph-spiritual-bouquet. If you participate from home, please consider sharing pictures with our parish family. We would love to see them! *[Explain how parishioners can share pictures – for example, by emailing them to parish staff to be shared publicly or by posting directly in the comments under a specific post on one of the parish's social media accounts.]*

As we celebrate the gift of fathers and honor St. Joseph, we also recognize that Father's Day can be a difficult holiday for many. We hope this spiritual bouquet provides an opportunity to pray for the intentions brought to your heart by this occasion.

◆ Pulpit Announcements

Option 1

(Suggested Weekends: The two weekends before Father's Day)

We invite you to join us in offering a spiritual bouquet to St. Joseph for Father's Day. Please see the parish website for more information.

Option 2

(Suggested Weekends: The two weekends before Father's Day)

We invite you to join us in offering a spiritual bouquet to St. Joseph for Father's Day. Simple suggestions for families to participate from home are available on the parish website.

As we celebrate the gift of fathers and honor St. Joseph, we also recognize that Father's Day can be a difficult holiday for many. We hope this spiritual bouquet provides an opportunity to pray for the intentions brought to your heart by the occasion.

◆ Social Media Post

We invite you to join us in offering a spiritual bouquet to St. Joseph for Father's Day. We invite you to comment with prayer intentions you'd like to be entrusted to St. Joseph's intercession. We also encourage you to participate from home with these simple suggestions: usccb.org/joseph-spiritual-bouquet.

As we celebrate the gift of fathers and honor St. Joseph, we also recognize that Father's Day can be a difficult holiday for many. We hope this spiritual bouquet provides an opportunity to pray for the intentions brought to your heart by the occasion.



A Spiritual Bouquet to St. Joseph, Patron of Fathers

Option for At-Home Adaptation

Materials:

- ◆ *Flowers, greenery, or some other type of small gift like hearts or flowers cut out of colored construction paper
- ◆ Small note cards or slips of paper
- ◆ Pens, crayons, or markers
- ◆ Small basket or other container to hold the prayer intentions
- ◆ Vase of water (if using fresh flowers or greenery)
- ◆ **Statue, icon, or image of St. Joseph
- ◆ Copies of a prayer seeking St. Joseph's intercession, such as the [Prayer to St. Joseph after the Rosary](#) or a [Litany of St. Joseph](#)

**This activity can also be completed without flowers or any other type of gift. Simply place your written intentions in a basket before the designated statue or image of St. Joseph. Or, you could draw a flower or another image next to your prayer intention on the paper.*

***If you don't have any of these in your home, find an image online to display on a computer or other type of screen.*

Directions:

1. Gather your materials. Look around your own yard for flowers or greenery that might be available, or pick some up at the store.
2. Set up a small table for your spiritual bouquet. Place on the table your statue or image of St. Joseph with a small basket for prayer intentions and a vase with water or other receptacle for your offerings. Put writing utensils and something to write on nearby.
3. Pre-cut notecards or small slips of paper.
4. Invite household family members to participate in the spiritual bouquet. Participants can write down on the notecards or slips of paper what they would like to ask St. Joseph to intercede for. They can then be invited to place their prayer intentions in the basket, as well as to place their flowers or other offerings in the vase or other receptacle in thanks for St. Joseph's fatherly care.
5. When all participants have presented their prayer intentions and gifts to St. Joseph, offer a closing prayer of your choosing.
6. Encourage family members to pray throughout the week for all the intercessions placed under the St. Joseph's care.

The purpose of this activity is to seek the intercession of St. Joseph for all the intentions of our hearts related to the observance of Father's Day, as well as to thank him for his fatherly love for us. Assess what works best for your circumstances and make adaptations or changes as needed!

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