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Message from the Prelate (11 March)

In preparation for the Solemnity of St Joseph, Mgr. Ocariz suggests that we have recourse to his intercession as God's faithful servant in continual contact with Jesus.

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Rome, 11th March 2020

My dearest children: may Jesus watch over my daughters and sons for me!

Now that the Solemnity of St Joseph is so close, I suggest that you have recourse personally, and more intensely, to the example of the Holy Patriarch, as “God's faithful servant in continual contact with Jesus” (*Christ is Passing By*, no. 56).

From the moment God chose to manifest his presence more strongly in St Joseph's life, we can see how Joseph got ready to be God's faithful servant: faced with the mystery of the Incarnation, during the flight into Egypt, in returning to Nazareth, and when they lost Jesus who had remained in the Temple. On those occasions St Joseph tried to accept what God was asking of him promptly, even though it was not what he himself had initially planned and threw his future into uncertainty.

St Josemaría also helped us to contemplate the fact that “In the

different circumstances of his life, St Joseph never refuses to think, never neglects his responsibilities” (*ibid.*, no. 42). Let’s always try to obey God with prompt, intelligent, responsible faithfulness, even though on some occasions we might not fully understand his plans. We may not be able to understand them, but we can always love them, in the certainty that God wants what is good for us; and that conviction will lead us to act with freedom of spirit.

St Joseph dedicated his whole life to looking after Jesus with fatherly love, and, on the human plane, he taught him many things, especially about work. At the same time, how much St Joseph must have learnt just by looking at that Child who was God! We have to learn everything from Jesus. He himself tells us, “Learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart” (*Mt 11:28*). May St Joseph help us to contemplate Jesus, in the

Gospel and in the Tabernacle, so that through Our Lady's motherly intercession we may become gentler and humbler, and more full of charity. And so, with the grace of the Holy Spirit, our hearts will be able to be filled with greater love for God and other people.

In the past few months many people have been affected by the epidemic which has spread to various parts of the world. As the Pope recently asked us, I invite you to "live this difficult moment with the strength of faith, the certainty of hope and the fervour of charity" (Pope Francis, 8th March 2020) Let us have recourse to St Joseph's intercession, asking him to spread his fatherly protection over the whole world.

A very affectionate blessing from
your Father

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