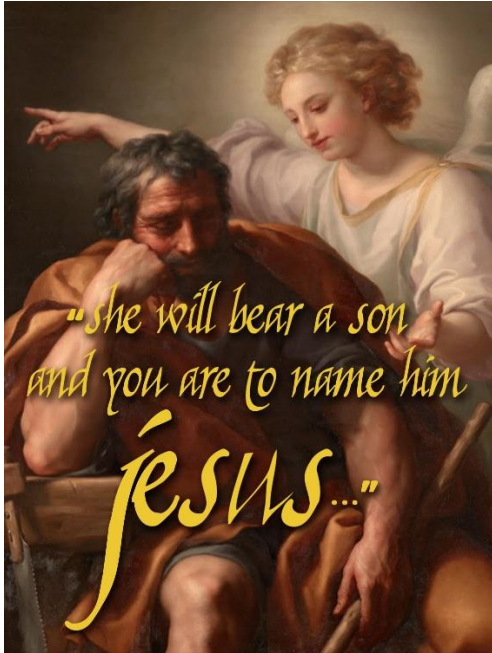


# Homily for the Forth Sunday of Advent\_2025

*Saint Joseph: Patron of Stress and Crisis Management*



In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Dear sisters and brothers, greetings of peace and joy. All of us, in one way or another, have faced stress, anxiety, pressure, and heavy workloads. Life brings unexpected storms, crises, and moments that test our faith. If we were to ask ourselves today: *Is there a biblical personality who can become a patron saint for stress and crisis management?*

I would confidently propose **Saint Joseph**.

Let us think of Saint Joseph for a moment.

He faced an **unplanned pregnancy**—a pregnancy that, humanly speaking, placed him in a painful and confusing situation. He had to travel a long distance to Bethlehem with Mary when she was about to give birth. Once there, he struggled to find a place for her to deliver the child. He may have had to assist at the birth all by himself. Soon after, he was forced to flee with a newborn baby to a

foreign land to save the child's life. He lived as a stranger, an immigrant, carrying responsibility, fear, and uncertainty.

Place yourself in the life of Saint Joseph and imagine the **amount of stress, crisis, and pressure** he endured.

Yet, every time Scripture speaks about Joseph, it speaks of him in **crisis situations**—and yet he responds with **serenity, calmness, prudence, and deep faith**. Joseph teaches us not how to escape stress, but how to **face it with God**.

## **A House Built on the Rock**

In the Gospel of Saint Matthew, chapter 7, Jesus gives us the parable of the wise man who built his house on rock. When rain, floods, and storms came, the house stood firm—not because the storms were absent, but because the **foundation was strong**.

Saint Joseph is that wise man.

Storms came into his life—unexpected, painful, frightening storms—but he did not collapse. Why? Because his life was built on a solid foundation: **virtues and principles rooted in God**.

My sisters and brothers, storms are unavoidable. Stress, anxiety, and crises will come. What truly matters is the **foundation on which we build our lives**.

## **Three Virtues from the Life of Saint Joseph**

*(Matthew 1:18–25)*

### **1. Compassion and Mercy**

Matthew 1:19 says:

“Joseph, her husband, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly.”

Before Joseph knew God's plan, his **first instinct was compassion**. He may have felt hurt, confused, even betrayed—but he chose mercy over ego.

Joseph could have exposed Mary to public shame according to the law. Instead, he said within his heart:

*“I do not want to cause her pain.”*

This is holiness.

Holiness is not loud prayer or public display of piety.

Holiness is **choosing compassion when you have the power to hurt.**

Joseph teaches us that righteousness is mercy in action.

## **2. Listening to God**

Matthew 1:20 says:

“As he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream.”

Joseph had made a decision—but he did not rush into it. He **placed his decision before God.** He prayed. He waited. He listened.

How many mistakes do we make because we act first and consult God later—or never?

Joseph teaches us the virtue of **listening.**

God speaks—through Scripture, prayer, silence, and the movements of our hearts.

As Jeremiah 29:11 reminds us:

“I know the plans I have for you... plans for your well-being, to give you a future and hope.”

If we cultivate a daily habit of listening to God, we will be guided rightly.

## **3. Obedience to God’s Will**

Matthew 1:24 says:

“When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him.”

Joseph went to sleep with one plan and woke up with God’s plan—and **he obeyed.**

No delay.

No argument.

No excuses.

This obedience changed everything. It took him out of his comfort zone. It required total surrender.

Like Mary who said, *“Let it be done to me according to your word,”*

and like Jesus in Gethsemane who prayed, *“Not my will, but yours be done,”*

Joseph trusted that **God’s will carries God’s grace.**

## **A Silent but Powerful Witness**

Joseph never speaks a word in Scripture—yet his life speaks volumes.

One commentary suggests that when Jesus bent down and wrote on the ground in John 8, as the Pharisees accused the woman caught in adultery, He may have written the name **“Joseph.”**

Why?

Because when Mary could have been condemned, **Joseph stood by her.**

Because Joseph chose compassion, listening, and obedience.

## **Conclusion and Prayer**

Saint Joseph stands before us today as a **patron for stress, anxiety, and crisis management.** He invites us to build our lives on virtues, so that when storms come, we stand firm.

He is a powerful intercessor.

Let us ask Saint Joseph to pray for us—especially in moments of uncertainty and crisis—so that we may grow in compassion, learn to listen to God, and obey His will with trust.

**Saint Joseph, pray for us.**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.