LIVING IN THE SHADOW OF SAINT JOSEPH

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Dear faithful,

When we think of Saint Joseph, when we come to speak of him, we come to think and speak of an exceptional person, of a model of virtues, especially for all men. We all lack such a model, especially we men. Today we lack Josephs. So much is the modern world a turning of God's order upside down, and so it is also the complete negation of who Saint Joseph was, and of those virtues and traits which in a special way distinguished, and still distinguish, Saint Joseph, and which we, Catholics fighting for the renewal of the holy Church, ought to imitate.

First, my dear friends, what should draw our attention is how the Evangelist describes Saint Joseph: "Joseph, her husband, being a just man." Saint Joseph was a just man, *Justus*. "Joseph most just," we cry out in the litany. The definition of justice, formulated by the ancient Roman jurist Ulpian: justice is the constant and unshakeable will to render to each what is due to him. He was a man who took great care to fulfil the will of God, not to transgress God's commandments.

At the same time, looking at the example of Joseph the Most Just, we find with dismay how much we lack this justice today. We have sunk into injustice. First, by refusing to give God what is God's, refusing to give God worship and glory. And second, how much injustice there is around us, between people! How unjust we have become, each one gazing at the tip of his own nose, each one grabbing the most for himself, because what is mine is "minier," what is mine must be on top. How unwilling [?] we are, my dear friends, to give another what is due to him! How perverse we are! We can call evil good and good evil, whenever it suits us, whenever it can bring us some advantage. A truly Jewish, Pharisaic, Talmudic mentality, which has permeated us Catholics, us Polish Catholics.

So today we ask Saint Joseph to help us form in ourselves the virtue of justice, that we may acquire it, that the desire for justice may become constant and unshakeable in us, constant and unshakeable.

LIFE IN THE SHADOW

Second, my dear friends, what distinguishes Saint Joseph is that he did not seek the glare of the spotlight, the glare of the flashbulbs, as we would say today. His whole life was a life in the shadow. Note that only a few passages of the Gospel mention him, and then the Gospel falls silent. We do not even know exactly when he died. We know little about Saint Joseph from Sacred Scripture. He always stood in the shadow — in the shadow of God and his will, in the shadow of the Blessed Mother, in the shadow of his foster Son, Jesus Christ — and he never sought human recognition, human glory. He was the provider, the guardian of the Son of God himself, and in a way took the place of an earthly father for the Lord Jesus. He would have had something to boast about, he would have had many merits to claim, as few others, right after the Blessed Mother. And yet his whole life was a life in humility, in silence, in the shadow.

And this, my dear friends, is also something that may shock us, us Catholics, including traditional Catholics, accustomed to things being loud and colourful, to everyone looking at us, admiring us. We like to credit ourselves with various merits, small or great, so that people will think well of us. We do not like, my dear friends, criticism; we do not like it when someone looks at us askance; we do not like it when nobody talks about us, when our merits go unmentioned. Look at how many different channels spring up on the internet, all kinds of preachers, pseudo-preachers, clergy, laity, seeking human attention, the number of views, the number of likes. Is this, my dear friends, the way a Catholic should live and serve the Lord God here on earth?

And here again we see how different our life is from the life of Saint Joseph. How much, my dear friends, we love the glare of the flashbulbs! And we will reproach John Paul II for liking the glare of the flash-

bulbs, because he liked it — it was a sick love. But the question is whether we, traditional Catholics, are not infected, to a lesser or greater degree, with the same bad love. Are we more afraid of what the Lord God will think of us? Is it not the highest time for us to ask, through the intercession of Saint Joseph, that we learn to live in humility, in silence, in hiddenness, in the shadow — in the shadow of God, of the Blessed Mother, of Saint Joseph [...] to the work of rebuilding?

But is it not the case that we credit ourselves with too many merits? Is it not the case that we want everyone to talk about us, to praise us? Is it not the case that there are many who, in silence, in hiddenness, simply fulfil the will of God every day? I once read an article, an interview with a certain post-conciliar priest, a star of the New Evangelisation, who stated that he sometimes has so many engagements in his life that he finds no time to say Mass, because he is so busy. Has some disease of overactivity not struck us?

So today we ask Saint Joseph that, through his intercession, he help us to form the virtues which we so badly lack. For if we do not lead our lives after the example of Saint Joseph, if we do not become just men, if we do not become humble men, fulfilling the will of God every day in quietness, then there will be no renewal of the Catholic Church. May Saint Joseph guard us against injustice and against our pride.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.