

In Imitation of Saint Joseph

God gave Saint Joseph a very important mission: to protect, guide, and nurture the Son of God. He is the Spouse of Mary, consecrated completely to her and to Jesus. He is the model of complete surrender to God and loving devotion to Jesus and Mary. Saint Teresa of Jesus (Avila), the great Reformer of the Order of Carmel, took him as her patron and guide because Saint Joseph is the master of the interior life. As Patron of the Universal Church, Saint Joseph is a powerful intercessor for all. He is also the patron of the Diocese of La Crosse for which the members of the Institute of Saint Joseph



OUR FOUNDING MEMBERS

CONTACT INFORMATION

Those interested in becoming an observer, contact::

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All of us need, as Pope Paul VI said here, to return to Nazareth, to contemplate ever anew the silence and love of the Holy Family, the model of all Christian family life. Here, in the example of Mary, Joseph and Jesus, we come to appreciate even more fully the sacredness of the family, which in God's plan is based on the lifelong fidelity of a man and a woman consecrated by the marriage covenant and accepting of God's gift of new life. How much the men and women of our time need to reappropriate this fundamental truth, which stands at the foundation of society, and how important is the witness of married couples for the formation of sound consciences and the building of a civilization of love!

*Pope Benedict XVI at Nazareth
14May2009*

“The Return to Nazareth”



*How I would like to return to my childhood and attend the simple yet profound school that is Nazareth! How wonderful to be close to Mary, learning again the lesson of the true meaning of life, learning again God's truths...Nazareth can teach us the value of study and preparation, of meditation, of a well-ordered personal spiritual life, and of silent prayer that is known only to God.
(Pope Paul VI at Nazareth)*

**The Institute of
Saint Joseph**

The Universal Call to Holiness

The Institute of Saint Joseph is a public association of the faithful in the Diocese of La Crosse. Membership includes married men and women, single men and women, diocesan priests and those who live the monastic life. Contemplative in its focus, the Institute of Saint Joseph has a primary focus of promoting the “universal call to holiness” of each baptized person in every state in life. The membership and structure are similar to other new communities in the Church founded in recent years. There is the continuity of the “old” with the “new” in being rooted in Sacred Tradition, what Pope Benedict XVI calls “the hermeneutic of continuity.” while offering a contemporary form of consecrated life for the Church of today.

As members of the Institute of Saint Joseph, you dedicate yourselves in a particular way to pray for and support the Diocesan Bishop and to build up the life of the Church in the Diocese through your spiritual program.
— Archbishop Raymond L. Burke

The Life of Nazareth

The Spiritual Charism of the Institute of Saint Joseph centers upon the humble place of Jesus’ hidden life with Mary and Joseph. Nazareth is a ‘school’ whereby the roots of the Gospel are discovered. The spiritual lessons of Nazareth are many, however, nine elements form the foundation of the life of perfection: silence, contemplation, poverty, chastity, obedience, prayer, study, word and charity. Members are formed in the lessons of Nazareth to order their lives in the discipline of God born in the womb of a loving ecclesial family. Jesus, Mary, and Joseph are at the very center of their spiritual lives.



The Evangelical Life

The Institute of Saint Joseph is an ecclesial family of consecrated life. The monastic members, diocesan priests and single lay men and women profess the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience according to their state in life. The married members profess to live in the spirit of the evangelical counsels according to the Sacrament of Marriage. This stable bond of profession unites the members to one another and inserts them more profoundly into the heart of the Church.

The four fraternities of the Institute of Saint Joseph have separate rules of life but one Constitution and a Moderator General who is the major superior.

The Nazareth Community is composed of monastic men, who live the traditional contemplative life, and oblate members (Sister, diocesan priest, laity) who are associated with the men’s community and participate in the life of prayer, work and recreation. A monastic priest is the Moderator of the Nazareth Community.

The Secular members live their consecration in the ordinary circumstances of daily life and offer witness to the life of dedication.

The Diocesan Priest members live and work in the particular assignments within the Diocese of La Crosse being a leaven of evangelical life in the presbytery.

Formation

The process of becoming a full member of the Institute of Saint Joseph begins with a one-year **observership** where the individual learns about our spirit, charism and nature. Observers are required to attend monthly formation meetings from September to May work with the Director of Formation. When this period has been completed the observer makes a Consecration to Saint Joseph to begin formation as a candidate. Two years of candidacy follow after which the candidate makes the Consecration to the Blessed Virgin Mary according to True Devotion by Saint Louis Marie de Montfort. This begins the time of novitiate and further individual formation continues. If the novice and the Council discern that profession can take place, the novice makes temporary profession in a particular fraternity (according to the person’s state in life) for five years. Final incorporation, or full membership, may be made at the end of this period with the approval of the Council. Monastic members begin the novitiate in the Nazareth Community with the Consecration to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The Contemplative Life

The Nazareth Community forms the ‘heart’ of the Institute of Saint Joseph by a public witness of the monastic contemplative life. They provide a stable center of prayer, work and community life for the secular and diocesan priest members who join them regularly for prayer, formation and community events. All members live a contemplative life in the particular circumstances of life by the daily prayer of the Church, the Liturgy of the Hours, and a spiritual program of meditation, spiritual reading and penance.

Cor Jesu Oratory

In 2008, the twentieth anniversary of the Institute of Saint Joseph, through the kindness of Fr. Robert Nelson and the parishioners of the former Sacred Heart Parish, Edson, who now belong to St. Joseph-Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Boyd, Wisconsin, with the gracious permission of Bishop Jerome E. ListECKI, Bishop of La Crosse, gave the property of the former Sacred Heart Church and School to the Institute of Saint Joseph. The former Sacred Heart Church is called ‘**Cor Jesu Oratory**’ and is the home of the Nazareth Community and center of the Institute of Saint Joseph as well as the site of the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite for the Chippewa Deanery by request of Bishop ListECKI on all Sundays of the year.