



# SSPX

## Sursum Corda

Third Order of the Society of Saint Pius X

Number 5 - Spring 2014 ❖❖

# St. Joseph

On the first anniversary of the Consecration of the Society of St. Pius X to St. Joseph, let us reflect on this consecration. Admittedly, our initial reaction at hearing the words *Consecration to St. Joseph* is one of hesitation. The word *consecration* seems too strong a word for devotion to St. Joseph. Being familiar with the term for our veneration of the Mother of God, it may seem to diminish what is offered to her by applying the word to St. Joseph. According to St. Louis de Montfort and his program for the *Total Consecration to Jesus through the Blessed Virgin Mary*, the term is obviously not considered too strong for the Virgin Mother. Indeed, the Virgin Mary is higher than St. Joseph.

In seeking the reasons why a *Total Consecration* through Mary does not offend sound theology, one

will discover the justifying reasons also apply to St. Joseph although in a different degree. The Blessed Virgin Mary belongs to the hypostatic order and the decree of the Incarnation. Can this also be said of St. Joseph?

In answering this question, the *praerogativa* of St. Joseph will be identified. These prerogatives are what place him in the hypostatic order; they are not simply honorary or devotional titles. They rather establish his position, his proximity to Christ, and his exalted dignity. These prerogatives are: True spouse of the Virginal Mother of God, true though not natural father of Jesus, and head of the holy family.

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# Letter from the Chaplain

Dear Third Order Members,

The spring issue of *Sursum Corda* is devoted to St. Joseph. Some years ago, a friend pushed me to request the consecration of the Society of St. Pius X to St. Joseph. At the time, I believed the term consecration to be out of St. Joseph's league. Understanding on a theological level the strength of the term, I believed it inappropriate with regard to St. Joseph. My skepticism pushed me to investigate. Happy to say I was wrong; this issue's article is the result of my investigation. I now understand the term consecration to be the perfect word because of St. Joseph's close relation to Jesus.

The article is theological in nature and therefore provides for a slow pensive read. Be mindful of the fact this was the intention from the beginning. The articles are intended to provide a wide range of considerations for your mental prayer. Read it slow; use it for your meditations.

Concerning the census sheets, a very poor response came from the members. At the moment, 380 members replied with the census sheet, giving updated information of email addresses and cell phone numbers. Email addresses will prove to be very useful in the future as updates, notices, and newsletters can be given to all subscribed members. I request/encourage you to fill out the census sheets and mail them to me. Believe it or not, there are still over 1500 that have not returned the census sheets.

Specific Third Order retreats will not be held this year with the exception of Ridgefield (maybe). I am attempting to make arrangements of dates with the retreat house. There is the possibility of having a retreat at another rented location. I am still checking details for this, so I will keep you posted. Of course, Tertiaries are encouraged to attend any of the regularly scheduled retreats.

In the Rule of the Third Order, the Archbishop stated: *"At meetings a collection will be taken up for the needs of the Third Order. A treasurer in charge will keep the accounts and will report them at meetings of the Council. The Council of the Third Order will decide how to use the resources at its disposal: internal expenses, help to a seminary, a school, the sick, retreat work, etc."* This is not something we have been doing and given the infrequency in most places for meetings, it is not something we will in-

sist upon. However, the spirit of the Archbishop is clear. He desired the Tertiaries to be helping as much as possible with the various apostolates within the Society. This is not only on a monetary level when possible, but also includes the various things in the church; for example, singing and serving mass, flowers on the altar, cleaning the church, the altar linens, housing the priest, meals for the priest, catechism for the children, etc. The spirit of the Archbishop stresses the collaboration of the faithful in a higher degree with the apostolate of the Society.

This lent I would like to remind Tertiaries of the value of almsgiving. St. Thomas states: *... almsgiving is reckoned among works of satisfaction in so far as pity for the one in distress is directed to the satisfaction for his sin; and in so far as it is directed to placate God, it has the character of a sacrifice, and thus it is commanded by religion.* During lent, the District is collecting alms for the apostolate in the District of Africa. Please be encouraged to offer some alms for this apostolate (which would be sent to the District). A little goes a long way in the missionary countries, so please do not hesitate sending the smallest amount.

Permit also a short excerpt from Dom Marmion concerning the value of fasting prescribed by the Church.

*"The Church has naturally to legislate as to the work of expiation which concerns her as a whole. She has fixed for all her children a share of mortification which notably comprises the observances of Lent, of Fridays, of the Ember Days and Vigils. One who is little enlightened prefers his own mortifications to these: but it is beyond doubt that the expiations imposed by the Church are more pleasing to God and more salutary for our souls."*(*Christ the Ideal of the Monk*, pg.177)

I know that I am behind in writing these newsletters. It is in mind to try to catch up; your patience is greatly appreciated.

In Christ,



Fr. Adam Purdy, Chaplain



Continued from p. 1

## The Hypostatic Order

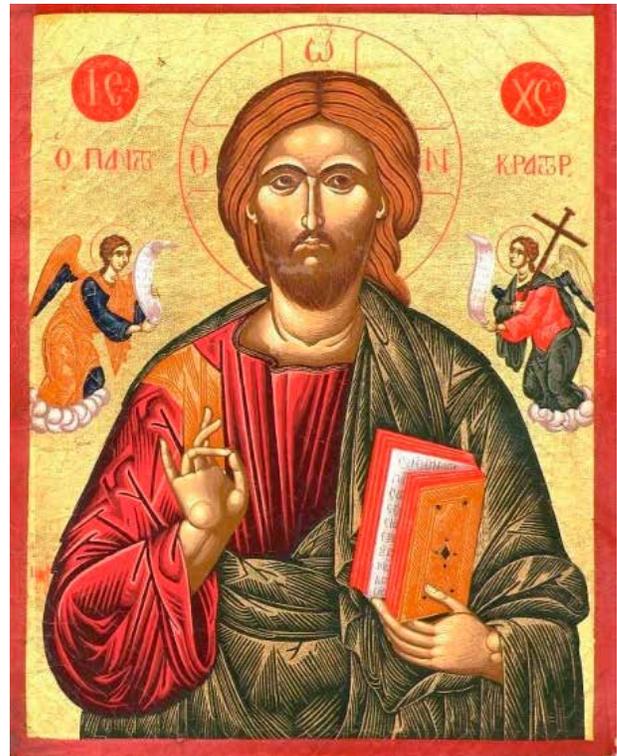
The *Hypostatic Union* is that of the divine nature and the human nature in the single person of the Word of God. “*In our Lord Jesus Christ we acknowledge two natures and one hypostasis*”.<sup>1</sup> All that is said to belong to this union—the individual human nature, its gifts and privileges, its relations, and all that has contributed necessarily to the accomplishment of this union—is established in the hypostatic order.<sup>2</sup>

The hypostatic union is the summit of all divine benefits; it is the highest grace that can be conferred on human nature. “*The mystery of the Incarnation holds supremacy over all divine works. The mind cannot conceive anything more remarkable than the immense reality contained in the expression: the Son of God, true God, became true man.*”<sup>3</sup> “*The union of the human nature with the Divine Person, which, as we have said is the grace of union, precedes the habitual grace of Christ, not in order of time, but by nature and in thought*”.<sup>4</sup> The hypostatic order, therefore, is above the order of sanctifying grace (habitual grace) and above the angelic order: “*To which of the angels has he declared Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee*”.<sup>5</sup> Whatever belongs to the hypostatic order is of the highest degree and above all others.

## Relations to the Hypostatic Union

As said above, one may belong to the hypostatic order by a relation to it. This relationship can be: intrinsic/extrinsic; physical/moral; mediately/immediately; freely/necessarily; actively/passively. Please bear with the following distinctions. Looking for the simplest way in this case would also be the shallowest.

- *Intrinsic relation* means ‘that which touches or belongs to the very essence of a thing’. We say that something belongs intrinsically to another when it is united to it physically. Hence to belong intrinsically to the hypostatic order is to concur in a proper and immediate manner in the constitution of the substance of the Incarnation, or physical cooperation in it. *Extrinsic relation* is neither to touch



the essence of the hypostatic union nor to be united to it physically. But we do not use extrinsic here in the sense of accidental, for even without touching the essence of a thing, it is possible to concur necessarily in its existence. Therefore, by belonging extrinsically to the order of the hypostatic union we mean the placing of some singular act relative to its constitution, in such a way that this act is, by divine disposition, necessary for the execution of the union. (Important!)

- *Physical relation* is to contribute the matter or part of the matter which constitutes the subject; it refers to the material connection with the flesh of Jesus. *Moral relation* refers to concurrence of will; a free and meritorious fulfilling of an indispensable condition in the realization of the Incarnation. (Important!)
- *Freely related* refers to voluntary consent. This voluntary consent suggests a degree of cooperation. *Necessarily related* points to the indispensability of the one related considering the present economy of salvation. The Holy Trinity could have chosen an infinite number of plans for our salvation. In his Infinite Wisdom, He has chosen Incarnation. Once entering this plan, certain elements/conditions will be indispensable. (Important!)

- *Actively related* indicates efficiency in the Hypostatic Union. The Holy Trinity works the Incarnation. *Passively related* refers to a kind of cooperation in the execution of the Union.

## The Virgin Mary

The Virgin Mary touches *intrinsically and physically* the human nature of Jesus, for from her most pure flesh the Holy Ghost formed the body of Christ. “It belongs to the supernatural mode of Christ’s generation that the active principle of generation was the supernatural power of God: but it belongs to the natural mode of His generation that the matter from which His body was conceived is similar to the matter which other women supply for the conception of their offspring. Now, this matter, according to the Philosopher, is the woman’s blood, not any of the blood, but brought to a more perfect stage of secretion by the mother’s generative power, so as to be apt for conception. And therefore, of such



matter was Christ’s body conceived.”<sup>6</sup>

Moreover, God asked Mary’s consent; her relation to the Incarnation is therefore *moral and free*. In this voluntary act rests her greatest glory and merit; she first conceived the Son of God in her soul and then in her body. The glory of her maternity must not be placed solely in the physical conception, but first and foremost in the free and meritorious act of her will. Merkelbach states: “Her cooperation was asked for by the angel and upon giving it, Mary offered her body to the Holy Spirit, whose work it would be to form a body for the Word which was to become Incarnate. It is the action of the Holy Spirit that principally brings about the conception and birth of the Son of God; but subordinate to it is Mary’s action, although she by herself could never have effected the Incarnation or the union of the Son and the flesh.”<sup>7</sup>

Lastly, the Mother is *passive* in the execution of the Incarnation; she exercises no efficient causality, neither can she be called principal cause.

The relation of the Virgin Mary to the Incarnation is so strong that Pius IX does not hesitate to affirm that she is included in the decree of the Incarnation. “And hence the very words with which the Sacred Scriptures speak of Uncreated Wisdom and set forth his eternal origin, the Church, both in its ecclesiastical offices and in its liturgy, has been wont to apply likewise to the origin of the Blessed Virgin, inasmuch as God, by one and the same decree, had established the origin of Mary and the Incarnation of Divine Wisdom.”<sup>8</sup> In conclusion, the Virgin Mary belongs to the Hypostatic Order.

## St. Joseph

Once it is established that St. Joseph belongs to the hypostatic order there is no necessity for further proof of his dignity. Mary’s dignity is called *quasi-infinita* because she participates in a certain manner in the hypostatic union, which is “not in the same genus as habitual grace, but is above all genera even as the divine Person Himself.”<sup>9</sup>

The reality of the Incarnation may be considered in two ways: *in fieri*—its constitution or coming about; *in facto esse*—the conservation of the order. To say this in a simpler way: It is one thing be responsible for making the Incarnation happen, collaborating to bring it about; it is a different thing to keep and protect the Incarnation once it is already done. With



this distinction, two conclusions may be reached.

St. Joseph cooperated *in fieri*—his cooperation in the constitution of the Incarnation in a true and singular manner, extrinsically, morally and mediately. Once again, in a simple way: St. Joseph was required for the Incarnation to happen, for the making of the Incarnation. Said in another way, his role is such that the Incarnation of Jesus Christ would not have happened without St. Joseph! This is his greatest prerogative.<sup>10</sup>

St. Joseph cooperated *in facto esse*—his cooperation in the conservation of the hypostatic union was direct, immediate and necessary. This means that St. Joseph played a certain role in keeping safe the Incarnate Son of God. It is clear this is a consequence of his first prerogative.

Let us now set to prove these conclusions.

## *In fieri*—True and Singular Cooperation

St. Joseph's cooperation in the making of the Incarnation (*in fieri*) is *true and singular* particularly considering his 1) union and influence to the divine maternity and 2) relation and union to Christ Himself, the fruit and effect of the marriage.

### Influence with respect to the divine maternity

The Maternity places Mary within the hypostatic order since the existence of the Word Incarnate depended upon her—on her consent above all, but also physically. This Maternity depended, not only upon Mary's consent, but also upon St. Joseph's consent. The fact that Mary would be a wife and a virgin could not have been without the consent of her husband. By his agreement to the marriage and to the virginity of Mary, she received the proper and ultimate disposition for Divine Maternity. By the special ordination and decree of God, the Incarnation was not to happen outside the context of marriage *and* virgin mother. St. Joseph is the last disposing cause making these two things possible. This two-fold relation of St. Joseph to the Virgin and Mother can be summed up with two quotations:

*“Christ was born of the marriage of Joseph and His Virgin Mother, and this not casually or fortuitously, but necessarily (sed necessario prosum),*



*according to the ordination of divine providence. This matrimony was an essential element for the fitting entrance of Jesus Christ into the world. Therefore, this marriage belongs to the economy of the Incarnation, to the order of the hypostatic union.”<sup>11</sup>*

*“Not alone the marriage of Joseph and Mary, but also their virginity, has a direct and immediate relation to the constitution of the great mystery of the Incarnation. The Mother of the Word made flesh had to be a virgin... Mary's virginity is, therefore, ordained to a most exalted end, the human generation of the Son of God. There is nothing more beautiful, more noble or more divine! But the Virgin had to be at the same time a married woman. Now the virginity of a wife depends necessarily upon the consent of her husband, for without such consent her virginity is not legitimate. Consequently, if Mary, according to the divine decree, was to become a mother while remaining a virgin in the married state, she could not be mother without her husband's consent, because upon him depends her virginity.”*

Some conclusions are as follow: The marriage

depended on the consent of St. Joseph; therefore, by his consent he influenced directly the divine maternity and through it indirectly the constitution of the hypostatic union. The relation and cooperation of St. Joseph to the making of the Incarnation is true and singular! This is the way God demanded and indicated it to be. Therefore, the marriage contract was realized before the Incarnation so that it could serve to conceal the mysterious operation of the Holy Ghost. The marriage has no other end than the conception of the Word; the marriage itself is the ultimate and indispensable condition of the Divine Maternity; the Christ child is a true fruit of the marriage.

The Virginity of Mary is also ordained to the Incarnation of the Word; it tended directly toward receiving the Son of God. God disposed that this virginity should not exist without the knowledge and consent of St. Joseph *and* accompanied by his own chastity. His chastity, as well as his consent to her virginity within the marriage, is ordained to the constitution of the Incarnation.

The entire development of the theology of Mary arises from one fundamental principle: Mary is the mother of God, our Redeemer.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, the entire theology of St. Joseph has one first and principal basis: the marriage which united him to Mary, the Mother of Christ. *“This fact is the reason and foundation of all the dignities and privileges of this holy Patriarch.”*<sup>13</sup>

### Influence with respect to Christ

This entire doctrine assumes a new importance under another aspect, which seems to penetrate even more intimately into the constitution of the hypostatic order. It brings to light more fully how, by the special ordination of God, the Incarnation depended upon the marriage of Joseph and Mary. Christ is not only the fruit born within this marriage; in a very special manner, (superior to any other physical dependency), the Incarnation is the true effect of this holy marriage.

By special divine ordination, Christ is the fruit and effect of the marriage between the Virgin and St. Joseph. St. Thomas in response to the objection that the marriage is not a perfect marriage as there is no fruit of descendency, distinguishes two classes of paternity. The child, he says, may be the true good, fruit or effect of a marriage: inasmuch as it is generated by the matrimony or because, owing to a special ordination, it is received and educated in the matrimony.

*“The offspring is not the effect of the matrimony only so far as it is generated by means of marriage, but also so far as it is received within the marriage and is there reared; and in this sense (Jesus) was the fruit of the marriage.”*<sup>14</sup> This was the purpose of the marriage of St. Joseph and the Virgin Mary. Thus each establishes a connection of causality; both spouses cooperated toward this effect. Christ is the true effect of the marriage of Joseph and Mary because it was ordained especially (*specialiter*) for that end. This fruit did not take place according to the natural law but by a special ordination. *“This marriage was essentially ordained for this.”*<sup>15</sup>

There is then a true bond of dependence between the ministry of St. Joseph and the Incarnation. This is summed up in the theological reason: God could institute a causal connection or bond of dependence between the ministry of Joseph and the Incarnation *in fieri*. There is nothing incompatible in this; rather it is highly fitting. Having charged Joseph and the Virgin with the completion of the Incarnation, it was only just that God should share with them to an eminent degree the privileges to be derived therefrom.<sup>16</sup>

### *In fieri*—Extrinsic but necessary cooperation

It is clear that St. Joseph is *not intrinsically or physically* related to the Incarnation.<sup>17</sup> He is not the natural father of Jesus; he does not touch the essence of the Incarnation or physically contribute to the formation of the human nature. The Holy Ghost is the active and principal cause in the creation of the human nature of Jesus. *“When the human nature was formed and substantially united to the person of the Word, the Holy Spirit operated solely, with the cooperation of the Mother... This causality of the Mother is constituted and developed in the physical order. But in this order there was not, and could not be, any causality on the part of a father. This was supplied by the power of the Most High.”*<sup>18</sup>

St. Joseph is *extrinsically* related to the Incarnation, being an indispensable condition for the execution of the Incarnation. We say extrinsic more to distinguish his cooperation from that of the Virgin Mary, excluding the least doubt of physical intervention. As said above, this does not mean to suggest an accidental cooperation. The cooperation of St. Joseph was necessary as it was thus decreed by God.



*“As this paternity was necessary in order that the Son of God should be introduced into the world in a fitting manner, it follows that St. Joseph exercised a ministry proximately and essentially required for the proper execution of the Incarnation. Therefore he belongs truly and primarily to the economy of the Incarnation”.<sup>19</sup> As the maternity and the virginity of Mary depended upon St. Joseph’s consent, so likewise did the mystery of the Incarnation. Joseph is the husband of Mary not only so far as she is the mother of God, but in order that she might be the mother of God. Mary is a virgin and mother with and by the consent of Joseph. “Through Joseph, Mary is what God wished her to be, in order that she might be His mother. We must say, therefore, that Joseph’s consent has influence extrinsically, but necessarily, in the actuation of the hypostatic union. He has effected the condition required in order that Mary might become the mother of God”.<sup>20</sup>*

## *In fieri*—Moral and Mediate Cooperation

In the constitution of the hypostatic order, St. Joseph cooperated by his free and voluntary consent. This was also the greatest glory of the Virgin Mary. This actuation in the moral order does not have as its direct and immediate object the Incarnation itself. The direct and immediate object is the maternity and virginity of Mary and, through them, the substance and realization of the hypostatic union.

Through this moral and mediate cooperation, St. Joseph exercised a certain permissive and conditional causality. He permitted at least implicitly the Holy Ghost to work within her womb; with the revelation of the mystery, he explicitly accepted it. Moreover, he fulfilled a necessary condition (the marriage), decreed by God, for the execution of this great mystery. *“If Mary’s marriage with Joseph was a necessary condition, according to the divine decree, for the Incarnation of the Word; if this condition was dependent on the free will of Joseph, and he freely complied, it cannot be denied, nor even doubted, that he has, by this moral cooperation, influenced the realization of the mystery in which the Son of God received human life and therefore he is truly the father of the Son”.<sup>21</sup>*

The title of foster father is insufficient to describe this connection and intimacy with Christ. St. Joseph



is the true, though not natural father of Jesus.

## *In facto esse*—Direct, Immediate, and Necessary Cooperation

It is manifest in the Gospel that the ministry of St. Joseph had as its direct and immediate object the care, protection and maintenance of the life of Jesus. In this sense, the Church in her liturgy and teachings has recognized his participation in the Incarnation. This recognition is explicit only with respect to the conservation of the hypostatic order. This is no small thing, even though it is inferior to an intervention in the constitution of the order. *“The life of St. Joseph prior to Incarnation of the Word was, without doubt, a preparation for this mystery. After the mystery was realized, all his life was spent for Jesus. His ministry had only one reason and one object: the conservation of the life of the Word made flesh. Therefore, his was a direct, immediate, and necessary relation with the order of the hypostatic union”.<sup>22</sup>*

## Conclusion

*“Eternal predestination covers not only that which is to be accomplished in time, but also the mode and order in which it is to be accomplished in time”.<sup>23</sup> St. Joseph was therefore predestined to the Hypostatic Order and is included in the eternal decree of the Incarnation of the Word. In the same decree is contained the divine maternity or predestination of the Virgin Mary as Mother of the Word*

Incarnate. The Mother of the Word Incarnate God is to be, at the same time, virgin and spouse; therefore God chose St. Joseph also from eternity to be her husband and the virginal father of Jesus Christ. *“This is the meaning which must be given to the propositions of certain authors who say that the decree of the Incarnation, given from eternity, in virtue of which the mystery is realized at a determined time and in a determined form (hic et nunc), has reference not only to Jesus and His Mother, but also to St. Joseph. It was determined from all eternity that the Son would become man, born in a miraculous manner of Mary, who was a virgin, and at the same time united in true matrimony to the just man Joseph.”*<sup>24</sup>

If we are therefore looking for a reason why the expression *Consecration to Jesus through St. Joseph* does not offend sound theology, look no further.

## The Blessed Virgin Mary to the Venerable Mary of Jesus of Agreda

Even though private revelations are not used at theological proofs, the following quotation is cited to move our devotion to St. Joseph.

*“My daughter, although you have written that my spouse Joseph was one of the greatest saints and most noble princes of the celestial Jerusalem, you cannot now declare his eminent sanctity. Mortals can never know it until they enjoy the vision of God, in which they will with admiration discover the mystery, and they will praise the Lord for it. In the last day when all men will be judged, the unhappy damned will weep bitterly for not having known, because of their sins, this powerful and efficacious means for their salvation, and for not having availed themselves of it, as they could have done, to recover the grace of the just Judge. The world has been greatly ignorant of the magnitude of the prerogatives which the supreme Lord has accorded to my holy spouse, and how powerful is his intercession with His Divine Majesty; for be assured that he is one of the greatest favorites of God, and one of the most capable of appeasing His justice against sinners. I desire you to be most grateful to the goodness of the Lord for the favor which I have granted to you on this occasion, and that you will render Him continual thanks for the illumination that you have received touching this mystery. Endeavor also, in future, to augment your devotion for my holy spouse, and bless the Lord for that He*

*has favored him with so much liberality, and also for the consolation that I enjoyed in bearing him company and knowing his perfections.*

*“You must avail yourself of his intercession in all your necessities, and so act as to multiply the numbers of his votaries. Recommend to your daughters to distinguish themselves in this devotion, since the Most High grants on earth that which my spouse requests in Heaven, and He will unite to these requests extraordinary favors for men, provided they do not render themselves unworthy to receive them.*

*“All these privileges correspond to the perfection, the innocence, and to the eminent virtues of this admirable saint, because they have attracted the complaisance of the Lord, Who destines for him inconceivable largeness, and Who desires to show great mercy to those who will have recourse to his intercession.”*

<sup>1</sup> De Fide Orthod. iii.3,4,5

<sup>2</sup> De myster. Chri., d.8,s.1,no.10

<sup>3</sup> Summ. Contra Gent. IV, c.27; cf. Summa theol. III:1-7

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. III:7,13

<sup>5</sup> Heb. 1:5

<sup>6</sup> Summa Theol. III:1,5 (modern science has certainly more to say about what a woman supplies in the generation of offspring, particularly on a genetic level)

<sup>7</sup> Mariologia, P.I,q.2,a.1

<sup>8</sup> Pius IX, *Ineffabilis Deus*

<sup>9</sup> Summa Theol. III:7.13ad3um

<sup>10</sup> (Please withhold your judgments at this moment! I am aware this is strong and bold and never heard—it does not mean it is wrong!)

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Sinibaldi, *La grandezza di S. Guiseppe* pg.106

<sup>12</sup> Merkelbach, *Mariologia*, I,q.3p.91,n39

<sup>13</sup> Lepicier *Tractatus de St. Joseph*, p.99 (ed.2, Rome, 1929)

<sup>14</sup> In IV Sent., dist. 30,q.2,a.2 ad 4um

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Boniface Llamera,O.P. *St. Joseph*, p. 109

<sup>17</sup> Some theologians assert St. Joseph is intrinsically related to the Incarnation; the meaning of the word intrinsic is distinct and not what is commonly used by theologians. Cardinal Lepicier says *“it is falsely supposed that St. Joseph cooperated intrinsically in the Incarnation, that is, in the same manner as the Virgin, although on a lower level.”*

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Sinibaldi, *Op. cit.*, c.1, p.38

<sup>19</sup> Bover, *De cultu S. Joseph Amplificando*, p. 32

<sup>20</sup> Sinibaldi, *Op. cit.* p. 122

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. c.3, p. 126

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. c.1, p. 41.

<sup>23</sup> Summa theol. III. Q.24, a.4

<sup>24</sup> LaGrange, *Angelicum*, April-June 1928, p.206