

# Was the Body of St. Joseph Assumed Into Heaven?

“...the sound of victory” will be heard in the Church Militant “when the faithful recognize the sanctity of St. Joseph. The Lord will let His light shine, He will lift the veil, and great men will search out the interior gifts of God that are hidden in St. Joseph; they will find in him a priceless treasure, the like of which they had never found in other saints of the Old Testament. We are inclined to believe that toward the end of time God will overwhelm St. Joseph with glorious honors. If in the past ages, during the storm of persecution, these honors could not be shown to St. Joseph, we must conclude that they have been reserved for later times. At some future time, the feast of St. Joseph will be celebrated as one of the greatest of feasts. The Vicar of Christ, inspired by the Holy Spirit, will order this feast to be celebrated in the Universal Church.” (FAVORITE PRAYERS TO ST. JOSEPH, Tan Books, 1997.)



This prophecy by Isidore de Isolani in the 16<sup>th</sup> century is being fulfilled in our times. While the Western Church has celebrated St. Joseph’s feast on March 19<sup>th</sup> since the 10<sup>th</sup> century, in 1870, Pope Pius IX declared St. Joseph Patron of the Universal Church--of families, fathers, expectant mothers, travelers, immigrants, home sellers and buyers, workers, every class of people--with a feast on Wednesday of the second week after Easter. In 1955, Pope Pius XII changed the General Roman Calendar to include the feast of St. Joseph the Worker on May 1. Josephology, the theological study of St. Joseph, is a recent discipline giving new understandings of St. Joseph’s **eternal preordination by God to the mystery of the Incarnation and to his place in the Hypostatic Order of Grace, that earthly trinity comprised only of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, which made the Incarnation possible.** Already in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, St. Thomas Aquinas spoke of **the necessity of St. Joseph’s participation in the plan of the Incarnation**, for if Mary had not been married, the Jews would have stoned her for adultery according to the Mosaic Law; hence, we come to understand that St. Joseph’s mission on earth was to protect the honor of both Our Lady and of Jesus, lest she be seen as an unwed mother and Jesus as an illegitimate Child. Joseph’s mission would conceal Our Lady’s divine maternity and the divinity of Jesus until the appointed time. (Ref: Edward Healy Thompson, **THE LIFE AND GLORIES OF ST. JOSEPH**, Chapter XLVI, Tan Books, 1980.)

When did St. Joseph die? Where was he buried? Was he raised from Limbo with the other saints at Christ’s Resurrection and taken to Heaven at the Ascension?

St. Joseph is last mentioned in Sacred Scripture with the finding of Jesus in the Temple, but it is commonly held that he lived close to the time of the inauguration of Jesus’ public ministry when it would be imperative that the Heavenly Father proclaim His divine paternity over the Messiah, and that Joseph be absent lest the people be confused when Jesus spoke of His Heavenly Father. After finding Jesus in the temple, the life of the Holy Family in Nazareth was a hidden life of prayer and union with God, filled, as the mystics tell us, with many ecstasies unfolding the mystery of the Redemption to Mary and Joseph. The message of Our Lady of America gives St. Joseph his due as Virgin-Father of Jesus

and Virgin-Spouse of Mary, guardian over the Father's two most sacred trusts and all of His earthly household. As the shadow of the Heavenly Father, he is worthy of great honor.

A 19<sup>th</sup> century priest, Father Paul of Moll, believed St. Joseph's body lay incorrupt in a tomb somewhere and that great things would happen for the Church when it is found. There are no bodily relics of St. Joseph, just as there are none for Jesus and Mary, which is the basis for claiming all three are glorified in Heaven. Matthew 27:52 states: **"The earth quaked, rocks were split, tombs were opened, and the bodies of many saints who had fallen asleep were raised. And coming forth from their tombs after his resurrection, they entered the holy city and appeared to many."** Many Church Fathers cite this passage as the strongest argument for the glorification of St. Joseph's body and his assumption body and soul into Heaven to be with Jesus. They believed the souls of these saints raised from the dead were reunited with their bodies, never to die again, and that they were taken to Heaven with Jesus at His Ascension. It would be unthinkable that they should be condemned to die again and be confined to the tomb again. (Fr. Satheesh Alphonse, SdC., "The Assumption of St. Joseph.") Since St. Joseph's holiness exceeds all other saints, save Mary, it is understood no privilege would be granted any other saint if it were not first granted to St. Joseph because of **his preeminent holiness and personal intimacy with Jesus and Mary in the Hypostatic Order of Grace.** Saint Bernardine of Siena believed that Joseph would enjoy the same privilege as Mary, according to the Apostolic rule, **"As you partake of the sufferings, so shall you also of the consolations."** (Thompson., Chapter XLVI.) St. Bernardine preached:

**We may piously believe, but not assert, that the Most Holy Son of God crowned his foster-father with the same privilege which he gave his mother; that as he assumed her into heaven bodily and glorious in soul, so also on the day when he (Jesus) arose he took Joseph up with him in the glory of the Resurrection.** (Father Donald Calloway, CONSECRATION TO ST. JOSEPH, Pg. 209, 2020.)



P. Giovanni Osorio also believed that this Holy Alliance would not be divided in Heaven as it was so closely united on earth. Isidore de Isolanis references Proverbs and the two robes as applied to the ancient Joseph, and sees the same for St. Joseph, the two robes signifying the blessedness of both soul and body. Suarez, too, believed St. Joseph reigns in glory. While preaching in Padua on the glorification of St. Joseph's body and soul, a gold cross appeared over St. Francis de Sales' head, as if in confirmation. He said:

**...how could we doubt that Our Lord raised up to heaven, in body and soul, the glorious St. Joseph? For he had the honor and the grace of carrying him (Jesus) so often in his blessed arms, those arms in which Our Lord took so much pleasure.** (Calloway, Pg. 209.)

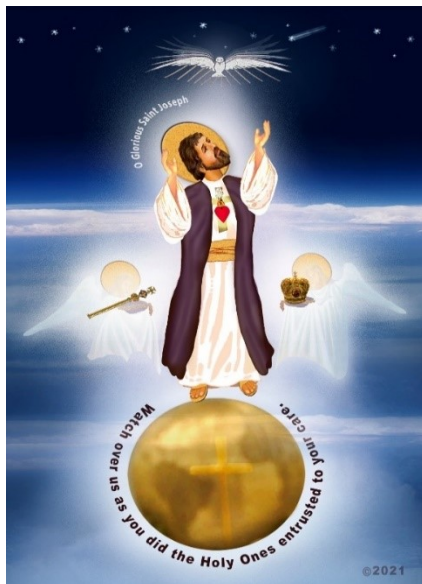
In recent times, Pope St. John XXIII, the Pope of St. Joseph, gave a homily on the Ascension, May 26, 1960, saying: **"it may be piously believed that St. John the Baptist and St. Joseph were bodily assumed into heaven at the time of our Lord's ascension."** (Catholic Culture.org.)

The most likely saints to have been raised from the dead at Jesus' Resurrection would be some of the patriarchs and prophets of old, St. Joseph, John the Baptist,

Elizabeth, Zachary, Ann and Joachim. The Church Fathers believed they were raised to be witnesses to the apostles and disciples of Jesus' own Resurrection. Who better to be raised as a witness than St. Joseph, Jesus' own father who held Him in his arms, fed Him, clothed Him, and died in the arms of Jesus and Mary? Faith does not contradict reason, and reason can only conclude that they were all glorified in their bodies and assumed into Heaven with Jesus at the Ascension in order to make his victory over death and his entrance into glory ever more splendid. As for St. Joseph, with all the honor Jesus gave Joseph in life, and the honor He gave Mary in not allowing her body to decay in the tomb, would He, could He, do any less for his father, Joseph? Grace is proportioned to one in accord with one's office. Is there any office, save that of Mary, more sublime than that of St. Joseph? Should not the fidelity to that office merit St. Joseph to be forever with his beloved Spouse and Son body and soul in Heaven? (Ref: Thompson, Chapter XLVI.)

Where was St. Joseph buried? Some believe in Nazareth where he had lived with Jesus and Mary. Others, based on Tradition and the time of year in March when the feast of the Pasch would have been celebrated, believe St. Joseph had gone to Jerusalem, as always, with Mary, and died there on March 19<sup>th</sup> and was buried in the Valley of Josaphat. (Thompson.) Jesus' Resurrection was proclaimed because there was no body in the tomb. Mary's Assumption was proclaimed because there was no body in her tomb. Neither is there a body in St. Joseph's tomb. Will his assumption be declared one day, too?

On March 19, 1958, Sister Mildred (Mary Ephrem) Neuzil had a marvelous vision



of **the glorious St. Joseph** suspended above a globe, his head raised to Heaven, his hands raised like those of a priest during the Holy Mass. His appearance was youthful but full of rare maturity and strength and his face had a gentle serenity. His pure heart was visible. Above his head was the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove.

**Standing sideways, facing each other, were two angels, one on the right, the other on the left. Each carried what appeared to be a small pillow in a satin covering, the pillow on the right bearing a gold crown, the one on the left, a gold scepter. The angels were all white, even their faces and hair. It was a beautiful whiteness that reminded me of the stainlessness of heaven. Then I heard these words: "Thus should he be honored whom the King desires to honor."** (Sister Mildred (Mary Ephrem) Neuzil, The Diary, OUR LADY OF AMERICA, Pgs, 29-30.)

These holy cards honoring The Glorious St. Joseph in the Year of St. Joseph are copyrighted and are available on our web site, [www.ourladyofamerica.com](http://www.ourladyofamerica.com). The prayer on the back was composed by Sister Mildred Neuzil. Help us honor St. Joseph and share these cards with others, and let us pray daily the Three Hail Mary's to honor Our Lady's special relationship to each of the Three Persons of the Most Holy Trinity.

**See <https://visitationproject.org/pages/the-three-hail-marys>**

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