



Via Lucis
“The Way of Light”
In the Presence of Saint Joseph

Cover Art: From “The Life of our Lord Jesus Christ” by James J. Tissot

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**Via Lucis “The Way of Light”
In the presence of St. Joseph**

The Way of Light (*Via Lucis*) celebrates and highlights the most glorious time in the Christian liturgical year, the fifty days from Easter to Pentecost. The idea for depicting The Way of Light was inspired by an ancient inscription found on a wall of the San Callisto Catacombs on the Appian Way in Rome. The praying of the Via Lucis is a contemporary discovery of an ancient devotion highlighting the continuing presence of the Risen Lord. This devotion was reintroduced in the official Vatican prayer book for the Jubilee Year 2000 titled, *Pilgrim Prayers*.

This Via Lucis variation uniquely considers the mystical presence of St. Joseph in our encounter with the living Christ. Saint Joseph is silent in Scripture but not in actions. As husband of Mary and with the entire community of saints he participates in our eternal journey with Jesus. Special consideration must be given to the striking watercolors of James J. Tissot. During a pilgrimage to Palestine in 1899, Tissot felt transported to the actual moments of Biblical events. Each of his paintings speaks a thousand words in the vivid actions they portray.

A suggested contemplative approach for this Via Lucis is to imagine yourself as the human in each of James Tissot's paintings while letting Saint Joseph speak to you in the silence.

Acknowledgements:

- Initial inspiration - Paula Hillman
- Portions of Via Lucis from the Catholic News Agency
<http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/resource.php?n=486>
- Responses – adapted from the Litany of St. Joseph
- Scripture - New American Bible with Revised New Testament and Revised Psalms © 1991, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Washington, D.C.
- Paintings and sequencing – From The Life of our Lord Jesus Christ by James J. Tissot and Gustave Dore.

Introduction

Sign of the Cross

Reading:

'For if we have grown into union with Christ through a death like His, we shall also be united with Him in the resurrection....If, then, we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall live with Him....Consequently, you too must think of yourselves as being dead to sin and living for God in Christ Jesus": (Romans 6: 5, 7, 11).

Reflection:

Let us meditate in communion with Saint Joseph upon the resurrection through ascension of Christ and discover the pathway of light that He blazes through our lives.

Silence



James J. Tissot, "The Anxiety of Saint Joseph", Brooklyn Museum

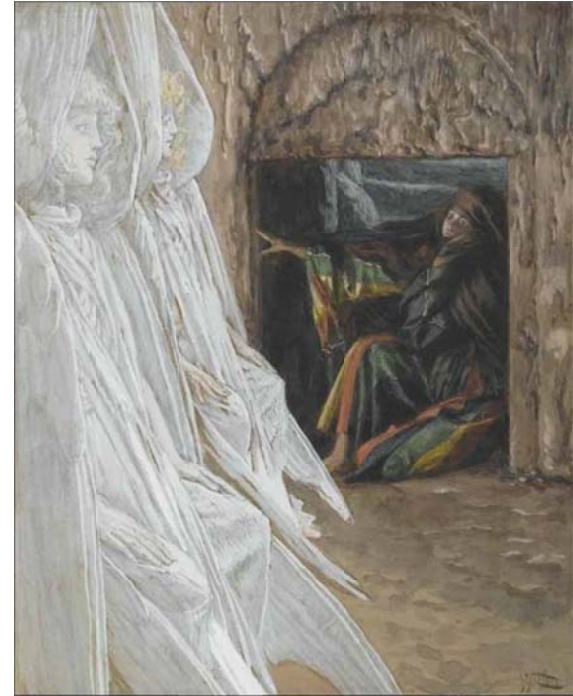
First Station
Jesus Rises from the Dead

All:
We adore You, O Christ
and we praise You!
Because by the Wood of the Cross and
the Light of the Resurrection,
You have redeemed the world!

Reading:
"The angel of the Lord said to the women: Do not be afraid! I know that you are seeking Jesus the crucified. He is not here, for He has been raised just as He said."
(Matthew 28: 5b-6a).

Saint Joseph:
Sister, like you I was visited by an angel, forever removing all my fears. God's Grace filled me with love, faith and hope to be the human father of Jesus and devoted spouse of Mary. Allow your heart to be united with ours, rise with us, join the "yes" of our love. Without fear, walk with me, into the presence of your Brother.

Silence



James J. Tissot, "Mary Magdalene Questions the Angels in the Tomb", Brooklyn Museum

Prayer:
V: Saint Joseph, husband of Mary and fearless protector of the Mystical Body of Christ
R: Pray with us

Second Station
The Disciples Discover the Empty Tomb

All:

We adore You, O Christ
and we praise You!
Because by the Wood of the Cross and
the Light of the Resurrection,
You have redeemed the world!

Reading:

"Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed"
(John 20:8).

St. Joseph:

At first I struggled with Mary's complete surrender and with the impossibility in her womb. Yet, in the witness of Mary's empty womb I humbly offered myself to our Lord in adopted fatherhood. God has given you this same precious gift, faith to seek the risen Christ. With open minds and eyes you already know him in the Word, in the breaking of bread and the gift of love to others. Believe that even in your empty and lonely places, Mary and I are also with you. It is here the Lord reveals His great love for you.

Silence



James J. Tissot, "Saint Peter and Saint John Run to the Sepulchre", Brooklyn Museum

Prayer:

V: Saint Joseph, humble, brave, obedient and loyal

R: Pray with us

Third Station
The Risen Lord Appears to Mary Magdalene

All:

We adore You, O Christ
and we praise You!
Because by the Wood of the Cross and
the Light of the Resurrection,
You have redeemed the world!

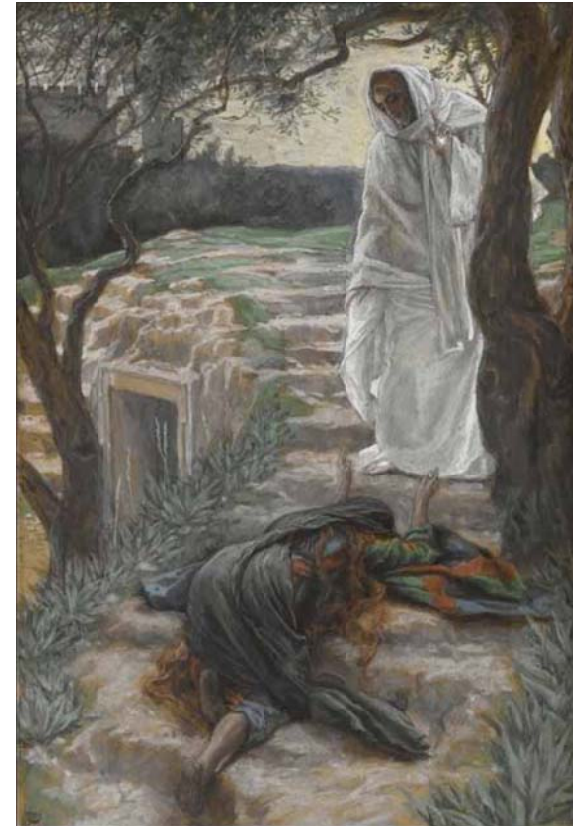
Reading:

"She turned around and saw Jesus there, but did not know it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?' She thought it was the gardener and said to him, 'Sir, if you carried him away, tell me where you laid him, and I will take him.' Jesus said to her, 'Mary!' She turned and said to him in Hebrew, 'Rabbouni,' which means Teacher. Jesus said to her, 'Stop holding on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and tell them, I am going to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.' Mary of Magdala went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord,' and what he told her." (John 20: 14b-18).

Saint Joseph:

As a child I held my sons hands as we shaped pieces of wood into perfection. He grew strong and independent, taking wing before my eyes. In the mingling of our love for each other, I began to understand humility. To hear him call me dad would send graces in overwhelming shivers, how could I not love back? I can hear Him calling you by name, to love back, to go to your brothers and sisters. Let go of what holds you back, take wing, go, go and tell the world you have seen the risen Lord.

Silence



James J. Tissot, "Do Not Hold on to Me", Brooklyn Museum

Prayer:

V: Saint Joseph, humble servant of our Lord Jesus Christ

R: Pray with us

Fourth Station
The Risen Lord Appears on the Road to Emmaus

All:

We adore You, O Christ
and we praise You!
Because by the Wood of the Cross and
the Light of the Resurrection,
You have redeemed the world!

Reading:

“Now that very day two of them were going to a village seven miles from Jerusalem called Emmaus, and they were conversing about all the things that had occurred. And it happened that while they were conversing and debating, Jesus himself drew near and walked with them, but their eyes were prevented from recognizing him. He asked them, ‘What are you discussing as you walk along?’ They stopped, looking downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, said to him in reply, ‘Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know of the things that have taken place there in these days?’” (Luke 24:13-18)

Saint Joseph:

Mary and I know your pain, your sense of despair. We discovered it in our own journey, when we realized we were without our son. We found him right where we should have known, inside the Word, inside His Father’s house. We had traveled like you do sometimes, in the wrong direction; but now we understand. In the shadow of Heaven, we can help you seek the joy and peace, to overcome whatever suffering, whatever pain occurs on your road. No matter where you are, the risen Lord is with you. Open your hearts like your friend Cleopas and you will recognize Jesus is there.

Silence



James J. Tissot, "Disciples on Their Way to Emmaus", Brooklyn Museum

Prayer:

V: Saint Joseph, for those that do not know Jesus

R: Pray with us

Fifth Station
Jesus Appears to Peter

All:

We adore You, O Christ
and we praise You!
Because by the Wood of the Cross and
the Light of the Resurrection,
You have redeemed the world!

Reading:

“So they set out at once and returned to Jerusalem where they found gathered together the eleven and those with them who were saying, ‘The Lord has truly been raised and has appeared to Simon!’” (Luke 24:33-34)

Saint Joseph:

From Heaven I watched Peter, James and John see Jesus standing in Glory near Moses and Elijah. I treasure this moment of pure holiness; men and divinity, gathered with and around my son. For Peter, for you, sometimes lost in loneliness, is to be blessed again by Jesus’s Glorified presence. For Peter, faith became eternal, nothing could stop his belief. Our Lord offers himself to you, appearing again and again, responding to your human needs, with the glorious light of divinity.

Silence



James J. Tissot, "Apparition of Our Lord to Saint Peter",
Brooklyn Museum

Prayer:

V: Saint Joseph, comforter of the troubled and lost

R: Pray with us

Sixth Station
The Risen Lord is Recognized in the Breaking of the Bread

All:

We adore You, O Christ
and we praise You!
Because by the Wood of the Cross and
the Light of the Resurrection,
You have redeemed the world!

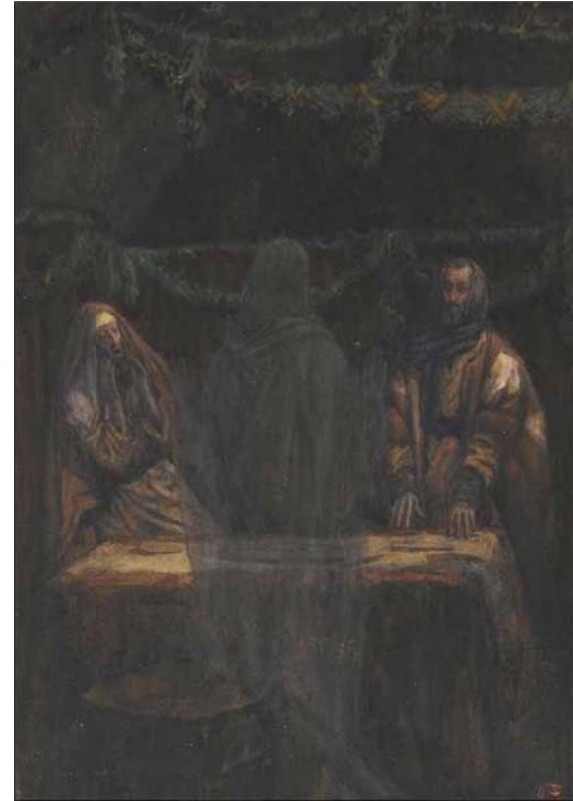
Reading:

"They urged Him, 'Stay with us, for it is nearly evening and the day is almost over.' So He went in to stay with them. And it happened that while He was with them at table, He took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. With that, their eyes were opened and they recognized Him, but He vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while He spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures to us'" (Luke 24: 29-32).

Saint Joseph:

Meals with our son were filled with awe and wonder. As we listened to his Word, His Grace entered and fed us, burning within to share with others. I humbly placed His beauty into my craft, my gift, unique, like yours. When you break bread together, filled with my son, our Lord, He sets you on fire with His love. He gives you an inner warmth, His Spirit, so you can use it with Him, to be His hands, responding, to the hungers of humanity.

Silence



James J. Tissot, "He Vanished from their Sight",
Brooklyn Museum

Prayer:

V: Saint Joseph, example to workers

R: Pray with us

Seventh Station
The Risen Lord Appears to the Community of Disciples

All:
We adore You, O Christ
and we praise You!
Because by the Wood of the Cross and
the Light of the Resurrection,
You have redeemed the world!

“Then he said to them, ‘Why are you troubled? And why do questions arise in your hearts? Look at My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Touch Me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see I have.’ And as He said this, He showed them His hands and His feet” (Luke 24: 38-40).

Saint Joseph:
I know the wounds of humanity and the suffering of so many because the birth of my son. I watched as He was tortured, torn, penetrated. Evil’s wickedness and jealousy of power brought darkness all around us. In victory, in God’s absolute love, Christ’s wounds were healed, their glorious light directly visible by His friends. Hold out your hands, give your wounds to God’s love. Allow him to touch you, to heal you, to transform your suffering into joy.

Silence



James J. Tissot, "The Appearance of Christ in the Upper Room", Brooklyn Museum

Prayer:
V: Saint Joseph, with hope for the wounded
R: Pray with us

Eight Station
The Risen Lord Strengthens the Faith of Thomas

All:

We adore You, O Christ
and we praise You!
Because by the Wood of the Cross and
the Light of the Resurrection,
You have redeemed the world!

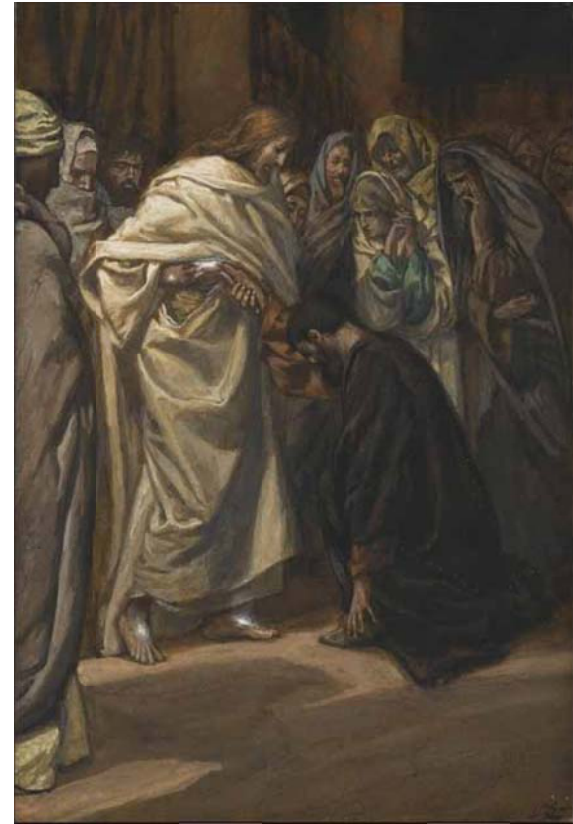
Reading:

"Thomas, called Didymus, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples said to him, 'We have seen the Lord.' But he said to them, 'Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nail marks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.' Now a week later his disciples were again inside and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said, 'Peace be with you' Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe.'." (John 20: 24-29).

Saint Joseph:

Imagine how I felt, a lowly carpenter asked to raise God. The same God I worshipped, how could this be? Yet, when I held my son for the first time all doubt was gone. I knew my embrace would forever intertwine with Jesus. I smile when I think of how He shaped me, into a human full of goodness, so God as Jesus could experience the potential of man. You are asked to do the same, examine and embrace Christ, let Him embrace you. He is not dead, but an eternal spring renewing you, making you a better person, so you, like Saint Thomas might know and share your faith.

Silence



James J. Tissot, "The Disbelief or Doubting of St. Thomas", Brooklyn Museum

Prayer:

V: Saint Joseph, man of faith

R: Pray with us

Ninth Station
Jesus Christ Appears on the Shore of Lake Tiberias

All:

We adore You, O Christ
and we praise You!
Because by the Wood of the Cross and
the Light of the Resurrection,
You have redeemed the world!

Reading:

“Simon Peter said to them, ‘I am going fishing.’ They said to him, ‘We also will come with you.’ So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. When it was already dawn, Jesus was standing on the shore; but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, ‘Children, have you caught anything to eat?’ They answered him, ‘No.’ So he said to them, ‘Cast the net over the right side of the boat and you will find something.’ So they cast it, and were not able to pull it in because of the number of fish. (John 21:3-6)

Saint Joseph:

I worked hard in my workshop to support my family. It was not always easy, as I was dependent on people buying what I built. My son learned how to be a fine craftsman, to find and carve, with the grain of the wood. I understood what God wanted from me, to help Jesus to become skilled in exposing beauty before it was formed, to be strong and confident. I was not surprised to see Him on the shore with His friends telling them with certainty where the fish were. I can see His presence in your life, He knows you well, helping you know where to go and how to gently and confidently tell others about what He has done for you.

Silence



James J. Tissot, "Jesus Christ Appears on the Shore of Lake Tiberias", Brooklyn Museum

Prayer:

V: Saint Joseph, lover of God and neighbor

R: Pray with us

Tenth Station

The Risen Lord Eats with the Disciples on the Shore of Tiberias

All:

We adore You, O Christ
and we praise You!
Because by the Wood of the Cross and
the Light of the Resurrection,
You have redeemed the world!

Reading:

"Jesus said to them, 'Bring some of the fish you just caught.' So Simon Peter went over and dragged the net ashore full of one hundred fifty-three large fish. Even though there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, 'Come, have breakfast.' And none of His disciples dared to ask Him, 'Who are You?'" (John 21: 10-12).

Saint Joseph:

My son, Jesus Christ, lifted all of humanity into Heaven, in Glory he challenges His friends that they can help do the same. He gave them the example of how working together could lift the heavy near breaking net onto shore. He is with them, with you, in community, filling the net, waiting with you, sharing His nourishing love. His community, Church, His presence, can fill you to overflowing if you allow it. It is food for your own soul, food for you to share with the many who do not know where to find Him.

Silence



James J. Tissot, "The Second Miraculous Draft of Fish", Brooklyn Museum

Prayer:

V: Saint Joseph, guide to heaven's riches

R: Pray with us

Eleventh Station

The Risen Lord Forgives Peter and Entrusts Him to Feed His Sheep

All:

We adore You, O Christ
and we praise You!
Because by the Wood of the Cross and
the Light of the Resurrection,
You have redeemed the world!

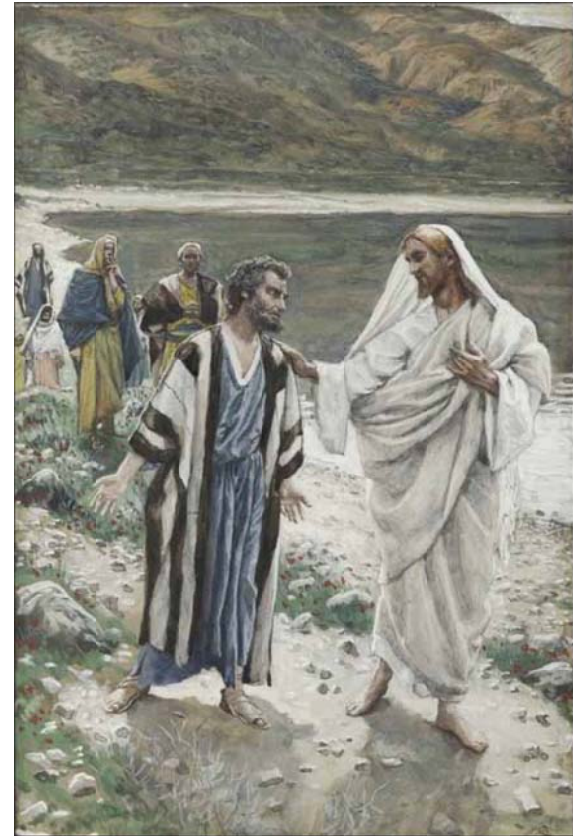
Reading:

"When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?' ... Peter was distressed that Jesus had said to him a third time, 'Do you love Me?' and he said to Him, 'Lord, You know everything, You know that I love You.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep.... Follow Me' " (John 21: 15, 17b, 19b).

Saint Joseph:

I was certainly upset at my son for assuming he could stay behind, but after confronting him, he became even closer to Mary and I. In a single instant all was forgiven. Remarkable graces and love flowed like never before. Jesus is this way with all His friends. Even with Peter's, with your denial, all Jesus asks from you is to climb the mountain of His love. Yes Jesus, I love you as a friend, yes Jesus I love you as a brother. Yes, Jesus I love you, as you love me. It is here, at the top, at the edge of Heaven, that I can greet you. Here, all is forgiven, all Graces flow, all love feeds His sheep.

Silence



James J. Tissot, "Feed My Lambs", Brooklyn Museum

Prayer:

V: Saint Joseph, obedient and trusting father

R: Pray with us

Twelfth Station
The Risen Lord Sends the Disciples into the World

All:

We adore You, O Christ
and we praise You!
Because by the Wood of the Cross and
the Light of the Resurrection,
You have redeemed the world!

Reading:

"Go therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age" (Matthew 28: 19-20).

Saint Joseph:

Allow me to enter your thoughts fully, so we can be together, heart to heart, soul to soul. Climb with me, as my son did with me, to loves greatest heights. From these peaks we can see the span of humanity. Listen to the groans of a world which is seeking what is missing in their lives. You know the path here, the truth, the answer. Trinity is eternally yours. Go be with them, like my beautiful wife, full of Grace, they need to know your joy, to know Christ's love.

Silence



James J. Tissot, "The Lord's Prayer", Brooklyn Museum

Prayer:

V: Saint Joseph, full of Christ love

R: Pray with us

Thirteenth Station
The Risen Lord Ascends into Heaven

All:

We adore You, O Christ
and we praise You!
Because by the Wood of the Cross and
the Light of the Resurrection,
You have redeemed the world!

Reading:

"When they had gathered together they asked him, 'Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?' He answered them, 'It is not for you to know the times or seasons that the Father has established by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' When he had said this, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him from their sight." (Acts 1:6-9).

Saint Joseph:

We are in the presence of each other, a communion of souls, we have transcended human limitations to get here. You have risen towards me and I have come toward you. I watched my son reach to Heaven many times in His humanity, like you do now. His ascent is continual because He is the Alpha and the Omega. He may have risen from your sight, yet consider this very moment, your faith, has unveiled His presence.

Silence



James J. Tissot, "Ascension from the Mount of Olives and he disappeared from their sight", Brooklyn Museum

Prayer:

V: Saint Joseph, human teacher to Jesus

R: Pray with us

Fourteenth Station
Mary and the Disciples Keep Vigil in the Upper Room for the Spirit's Advent

All:
We adore You, O Christ
and we praise You!
Because by the Wood of the Cross and
the Light of the Resurrection,
You have redeemed the world!

Reading:
"When they entered the city, they went to the upper room where they were staying.... The apostles devoted themselves with one accord to prayer, together with some women, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and His brothers. Suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them." (Acts 1:13a, 14 and Acts 2:2a-3)

Saint Joseph:
Pray with me, with Mary my holy wife and our Lords friends in joyful prayer. God has poured Himself out upon us, we are filled with His Spirit. It surrounds us, calms us, brings us peace, fills us with hope, with faith, with love. Listen to the whispers of God's will in the wind. To know this gift of Spirit is to always know joy, always know love because He is always with us.

Silence



"The Descent of the Spirit", engraving by Gustave Doré
from the 1865 La Sainte Bible

Prayer:
V: Saint Joseph, full of joy
R: Pray with us

**Fifteenth Station
In the Presence of Christ**

Reading:

"While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it anew with you in my Father's kingdom." (Matthew 26:26-29)

Saint Joseph:

We, have shared a journey with the Risen Lord. As servants and witnesses of Christ, let us now pray in the way our Savior taught us:

All:

Our Father, Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.



James J. Tissot, "The Communion of the Apostles", Brooklyn Museum

Let us offer each other a Sign of Peace