

## *Sending in your Petitions .....*

You are invited to send in your petitions, which will be placed at St Joseph's Altar during the Novena to be remembered in the Masses and prayers. If you would like to have your deceased relatives and friends remembered or if you have any special intentions, please list them on the enclosed slip and return them before the start of the Novena. Thank you so much for supporting our missionary work in previous years with your prayers, your letters of encouragement and your contributions.

Our Novena Masses will be available to view on Zoom, via our Mill Hill website: [www.millhillmissionaries.com/novena](http://www.millhillmissionaries.com/novena).

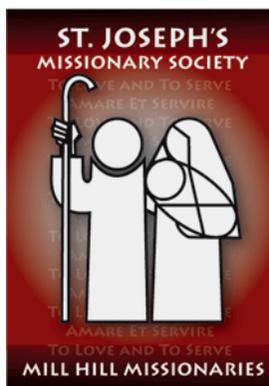
All donations towards our work are gratefully received. Could you please make cheques payable to 'St Joseph's Missionary Society'. Thank you.

## *Requesting a Booklet .....*

If you would like receive a Novena Booklet by post to enable you to join us from home by praying the daily Novena, please write to the address below, enclosing a stamped self addressed envelope if possible.

Novena Director  
6 Colby Gardens  
Maidenhead  
SL6 7LGZ

[novenamhm@gmail.com](mailto:novenamhm@gmail.com)



For more information on Mill Hill Missionaries, visit  
[www.millhillmissionaries.co.uk](http://www.millhillmissionaries.co.uk)  
Registered Charity Numbers 220690 & SC039809

Mill Hill Missionaries

# NOVENA NEWS



**National Novena to St Joseph**

**10—18 March 2022**

*Warmest greetings .....*

6 Colby Gardens  
Maidenhead  
SL6 7GZ

The past two years or so of the Covid pandemic have been a particularly challenging time for all of us. The many various restrictions have forced us to modify and even cancel long-held plans, put “normality” on hold and adapt to new ways of interacting with each other. One way or another, we have all had to adapt to loss – loss, not only of loved ones, but also of any sense of normality, security, and certainty. Life suddenly is no longer what we thought it to be or expected it to be or even what we thought we had a right for it to be. Covid has indeed shaken us all out of our “comfort zones.” Some have even described the events of the past two years as “apocalyptic.”

This rather foreboding word often conjures up images of some kind of a final reckoning – reward and punishment – in anticipation of the “end times.” However, it simply derives from the Greek word for “apocalypse” which means “unveiling.” The Franciscan spiritual writer Fr. Richard Rohr says that ‘when things are “unveiled,” we stop taking a whole lot of things for granted.’ Events such as the pandemic force us to look at things in a new and radical way, offering us ‘an invitation to greater depth and breadth—and compassion.’ We see how the pandemic has brought out the best in so many of us, with many examples of self-giving and self-sacrifice and even heroic endeavour. We are coming towards a new appreciation of who and what is important in our lives and where our true value systems really lie.

The pandemic has spelled the death of so much that was familiar in our lives. However, if we trust the Gospel message of resurrection, we also know that an ending is also the place for a new beginning. Death promises a new kind of life.

St. Joseph was no stranger to upheaval in his life. Long before his Happy Death in the presence of Our Lord and His Blessed Mother, Joseph died many, smaller “deaths.” There was the “death” of not knowing at first who was the true father of the child his fiancée Mary had conceived, and the possible stigma of being known as a cuckolded husband; the “death” of uprooting and going to Bethlehem for a census that ultimately would extract taxes for a foreign, oppressive regime;

the “death” of being unable to provide a safe space and shelter for the birth of Jesus; the “death” of being uprooted again and fleeing as a refugee to Egypt; the “death” of not only losing Jesus in the Temple in Jerusalem, but also of being seemingly publicly repudiated by this same precocious 12-year-old who “must be about my Father’s business” (Luke 2:50).

Each of these smaller deaths implied a letting go – letting go of whatever hopes and dreams he had for his own life and that of his family. Each letting go was in a way its own apocalypse. Each “death” unveiled, enabled, and furthered God’s plan for His Son, Jesus; and each one showed how Joseph would play an active, willing role in that plan.

I would like to thank you all, once again, for the extremely generous support you showed during our Novena last year. Your prayers and support do so much to promote the work of the Mill Hill Missionaries in your homes and parishes, and to the Church’s mission throughout the world.

*Through this Novena of 2022 may St. Joseph teach us to discover our own unique roles in furthering God’s plan of loving action and compassion for the world.*

The Novena Director, MHM  
Novena Director

*The cover photograph is from a stained glass window in our former Mill Hill House in Kilkenny, Ireland—courtesy of Fr. James O’Connell, MHM.*