by Dominicans of the Province of St. Joseph
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Father, Husband, Worker. We celebrate this Silent Saint's feast directly in the middle of Lent. This feast calls for celebration in the darkest season of the Church. So how do we reconcile the two? Let's look at the five ways St. Joseph can help us on our Lenten Journey.

SIMPLICITY

Joseph is considered to be just a regular, law-abiding Jew—an average Joe if you will. He didn't go around Nazareth working miracles and polishing his halo; rather, he lived his holiness wrapped in simplicity.

When we act simply, we take no heed of our glory but seek God's alone. Such simplicity is a modesty of soul, guarding the intimacy we have with God through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

WORK

On May 1, we celebrate the feast of St. Joseph the Worker. He is a saint who knows how to roll up his sleeves and put in a hard day's work. Lent is a good time to live out this dignity of work by imitating St. Joseph. God draws us to Himself through the ordinary means of simply fulfilling our tasks. We need not search for extraordinary acts of penance or lengthy prayers, especially if these detract from our normal duties.

So before we add on extra practices, we should redouble our attentiveness to the work already before us.

REST

While Joseph shows us the dignity of work, he had some of his best moments as he slept. It was here that God spoke to him repeatedly through dreams. We can distinguish two types of rest: physical sleep and spiritual abandonment to God. Both are critical for holiness. Sleep renews us for another day of work and love. Just ask the mother of a newborn about the importance of sleep. Abandonment increases our hope in God's loving providence, strengthening our faith in times of trials and creating room for love to grow.

By both sleep and abandonment, we recognize our limits: we need sleep and we need God.

FAMILY

Joseph's holiness came through Jesus and Mary, by serving them and receiving from them. Similarly, God draws us to himself through those around us. We do not become saints as isolated individuals but as members of a family or community.

Lent is a good opportunity to examine our closest relationships. Is there a need to forgive? Is there love that needs rekindling? Is there gratitude missing? These are excellent ways of giving alms.

JESUS AND MARY

Of course, Joseph's family isn't your normal family. There's a special grace about Jesus and Mary (understatement

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