



40 Ideas for 40 Days

from Joe Paprocki

Silence is Golden – In Honor of St. Joseph

March 19 is the [Feast of Saint Joseph](#) and he serves as the inspiration for this Lenten activity. One aspect of [St. Joseph's life](#) is especially fitting for Lent and that is his quiet nature. The Gospels reveal Joseph as a man of few words and he is revered for his “silence” – his quiet dedication to his family and to hard work. Here's what Pope Benedict XVI said about Joseph back in 2005:

The silence of Saint Joseph is given a special emphasis. His silence is steeped in contemplation of the mystery of God in an attitude of total availability to divine desires. It is a silence thanks to which Joseph, in unison with Mary, watches over the Word of God, known through the Sacred Scriptures, continuously comparing it with the events of the life of Jesus; a silence woven of constant prayer, a prayer of blessing of the Lord, of the adoration of His holy will and of unreserved entrustment to his providence. It is no exaggeration to think that it was precisely from his “father” Joseph that Jesus learned — at the human level — that steadfast interiority which is a presupposition of authentic justice.... Let us allow ourselves to be “filled” with Saint Joseph's silence! In a world that is often too noisy, that encourages neither recollection nor listening to God's voice.

Pope Benedict XVI

Angelus, December 18, 2005



Silence is Golden – In Honor of St. Joseph

And so we honor St. Joseph today by inviting our young people to experience silence! This activity is taken from the Kindergarten book – [God Loves Us](#) – but catechists can certainly adapt it for older children.

- Invite the children to brainstorm noisy activities that they engage in with their friends.
- Then, explain that we can also have fun doing the same or similar activities quietly.
- Use this example. Blow some bubbles and allow the children to express their delight and excitement as they “chase” them.
- Then, stop, and tell the children that you will blow bubbles again but that this time they should listen for the “sound” of the bubbles floating in the air, the “sound” they make when they land and when they break. Explain that they will have to be very quiet in order to hear these sounds. Tell them they can watch the bubbles but may not touch them.
- Blow some bubbles and remind the children to remain quiet by gently putting your finger to your lips.
- When you are finished, tell the children that quiet helps us to enter into our hearts where we can meet God.
- Explain that today is the Feast of St. Joseph, who was a quiet man and that, through his inspiration, we can learn to be quiet during this season of Lent so that we can meet Jesus in our hearts.
- Invite the children to sit back in their chairs with their backs straight, feet flat on the floor, hands resting in their laps and open, eyes closed.
- Invite the children to listen for the sounds around them: a bird singing outside, noise from another room, a car or truck passing by, a siren in the distance.
- Then, invite the children to listen for sounds inside themselves: breathing, swallowing, heartbeat.
- Allow the children to sit in silence for as long as they are capable.
- Encourage them to practice this on their own at home and to ask God to help them enter their hearts where they can spend time with him.