

*Act of Presence of God*

1. “And they went with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger” (Luke 2:16). St Joseph, the man with an ever-welcoming smile, is the teacher of the interior life. Do I have recourse to him to learn how to love Jesus, and how to teach my family to do the same?

2. The Gospel describes Joseph as “just”, that is, “holy”. Do I too try to seek holiness in everything I do (at work, at home, etc.)? Do I make an honest contribution to society? Am I fair and supportive in my work relationships and in the fulfilment of my family and social duties? Do I work well, making a pleasing offering to God? Do I get home early enough to spend time with my family and look after their needs? Do I try not to complain when I’m tired, and do I try to face difficulties positively? Do I ask my family for help when I need it?

3. “When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him” (Matt 1:24). Do I ask God for light to know his will, and strength to fulfil it immediately? Whenever I propose or demand something at work or at home, do I try to explain clearly the reasons behind it? Do I try to do so in a pleasant manner, leaving room for people’s initiative? Before important family decisions, do I pray about them and discuss them with my parents or older sibling when necessary?

4. “See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are!” (1 John 3:1). Do I see the Christian life as a progressive divinisation? Do I respond to God’s love by making him known, and speaking about the sacraments? Do I strive to ensure that my thoughts, words and deeds reflect Christ’s love? Do I communicate to my friends, with a smile, the peace and serenity of a soul in constant union with Jesus?

5. “You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide” (John 15:16). Do I realise that to pass on to my neighbour what I have received is the way to lead him to true happiness?

6. “Jesus said to him, ‘Follow me’. And he rose and followed him” (Matt 9:9). Like St Matthew, do I respond promptly to God’s invitation? Am I aware that vocation is an extraordinary gift?

7. “And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, ‘This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!’” (Luke 9:35) Do I try to listen to Jesus in my prayer? Do I try to get to know him better through reading and meditating on the Gospel? Do I talk to him about my family and my friends? Are there any subjects I don’t pray about?

8. “God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord” (1 Cor 1:9). Do I trust God? Do I ask him to deepen my hope in the face of difficulties or when tempted by discouragement?

9. “Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master” (Matt 25:21). Am I inspired by the thought of the eternal vision of God in heaven? Do I pray, offer mortifications and act so that many other souls may obtain the reward of divine mercy?

10. Jesus said to Martha, “‘I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?’ She said to him, ‘Yes, Lord’” (John 11:25-27). Like Martha, do I truly desire to be faithful to God unto death? Do I reject sin and seek always to grow in God’s love?

11. In the conversation between Jesus and Mary at the wedding at Cana, one can see how close Mother and Son were to each other. Do I balance affection and authority with my siblings so they find it easy to tell me everything, without fear? Am I really their friend? Do I know how they spend their time, where they are when they go out, what magazines they like to read? When we watch television together, do I make use of this to increase their critical awareness? Do I teach them to take their own decisions?

12. “Jesus wept. So the Jews said, ‘See how he loved him!’” (John 11:35-36). Do I know how to love my friends? Do I look after them, especially in adversity or sickness? Do I introduce them to Christ? Am I able to make Jesus’ life and teachings attractive, without fear of being misunderstood?

13. Does my so called virtual digital life materialize in apostolic fruits such as confessions, conversions, effective time together, attendance to the means of formation, etc.?

14. “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother” (Matt 18:15). Am I upright and loyal with others, avoiding criticism or gossip?

15. “And Mary said, ‘Behold the handmaid of the Lord; let it be done unto me according to your word’” (Luke 1:38). Do these words of our Lady lead me to renew my readiness to fulfil God’s will?