

ST. JOSEPH'S ALTAR: WHAT IS IT?

PICTURE IT...SICILY...IT WAS A YEAR OF FAMINE:

Agriculture was crucial to the Island of Sicily and it had been struck with famine many years ago...no rain, no crops, and barren fields.



The only thriving plant and source of nutrition was the fava bean and because of its bounty it became known as the, “lucky bean.”

St. Joseph is the Patron Saint of Sicily and when the people of this island pleaded to St. Joseph to intercede for them for rain and recovery, the beautiful answer came with plenty of rains from Heaven. In deep gratitude and desire of giving thanks, the Sicilians prepared a humble table in his honor of the bountiful harvest. When all honor and prayers were concluded, the grateful servants distributed the food to the less fortunate.

The custom of St. Joseph's Altar was introduced to us from the Sicilian immigrants and is now widely celebrated throughout the U.S. Part of that custom is to have a small brown bag available to all who donate with a small token of appreciation inside it. While styles differ and levels of grandeur are oftentimes extraordinary, **Immaculate Conception Church will have TWO small altars: one located at the back of the church for all Parishioners to donate canned or dry goods and the second one to be situated inside the school for the children.** Our hope is to see this drive be an abundant blessing during our Lenten Season and **GIVE BEYOND MEASURE** in celebration and honor of the Risen Lord, Jesus Christ! Alleluia, alleluia!

++ Those who work on St. Joseph's Altar are offering a promise of gratitude and prayer to St. Joseph in appreciation for his intercession and are committed to blessing those in need. Therefore, those workers are not working for their own needs or purposes, but rather for St. Joseph on behalf of a family member or a friend in need of answered prayers. ++