

# Josephine Family

A space to live and promote the charism

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*Common Guidelines*

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 *Familia Josefina*

# Index

1. INTRODUCTION	3
2. IDENTITY FRAMEWORK: NAMING WHO WE ARE	5
2.1. Being a Josephine Family	5
2.1.1. Identity	5
2.1.2. Who we are as the Josephine Family	5
2.1.3. Different ways of living as the Josephine Family	6
2.2. Rooted in a charism	7
2.3. What helps us live as the Josephine Family	8
2.4. Challenges	9
3. CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK. Our place in the world	10
3.1. The working and poor world.	10
3.2. Women in the current context	10
3.3. The Church today	11
3.4. The Siervas de San Jose and the laity.	14
4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK. Living by promoting the charism	17
4.1. Our origins, a Home and a Workshop	17
4.2. A spirituality that nourishes existence, Josephine spirituality	17
4.3. A mission to make utopia possible, the evangelization of the working and poor world	19
4.4. Our charismatic references: Bonifacia Rodríguez and Francisco X. Butinyà	20
5. STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION. 21	
5.1. Why organize ourselves in a specific way as a Josephine family	21

5.2. Formation	21
5.3. Communication	22
5.4. Animation	22
5.5. A circular organizational structure	23
5.6. International team	23
5.7. Regional/national team	24
5.8. Local team	25
6. Final words	26
BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES	27

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Over the years, many of us have felt connected to the Josephine charism in different ways. This relationship has been woven together through shared experiences, work, and dreams, but we needed to put into words what life was giving us and what intuitively made us feel part of a large family with common values, meanings, and references.

On the other hand, the Siervas de San Jose, who since their inception have been the main promoters of the charism and who have enriched it the most to date, note that sharing projects with other people and entities has helped them discover that the charism is greater than the congregation and that it is a gift that, in various ways, other people have received throughout their history<sup>1</sup>. This awareness commits them, together with the Josephine laity, to promote new spaces for living and sharing the charism<sup>2</sup>.

To prepare the document, a participatory process was carried out involving individuals and groups who, in one way or another, felt part of that common identity offered by the experience and promotion of the Josephine charism. This document is the result of that journey of reflection and action undertaken by the commission.

It aims to offer a frame of reference for those who feel called to be part of the Josephine family, defining the space and modes of belonging, the values, meanings, and references that constitute the identity of the group known as the Josephine Family. The document also outlines the foundations and horizons that make it possible to live the charism as a Family.

Josephine, promoting a shared identity with different modes of commitment, but with shared bonds and paths that allow for a common and inclusive sense of belonging to become a reality.

The document is not intended to be a closed proposal, but rather a living and inclusive one. We are aware that we need to continue deepening and giving meaning from today to what we are called to be as the Josephine Family, facing the challenges

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<sup>1</sup> *Chapter Document Siervas de san José*, (2023), 41-42.

<sup>1</sup> *Chapter Document Siervas de san José* (2023), 43.

and difficulties that may arise on our collective path, but also celebrating the successes and achievements that will allow us to continue advancing in the great dream of making the charism meaningful and prophetic in the present and looking to the future.

The text first presents the definition of the Josephine Family and the ways in which that identity can be lived and shared. It then briefly describes the context in which the existence of the Josephine Family is justified and understood. Thirdly, it develops the elements that define the charism and its proposed meaning. Finally, it proposes ways to strengthen the sense of belonging and the spaces that can help to generate bonds and shared experiences.

## **2. IDENTITY FRAMEWORK: NAMING WHO WE ARE**

The fact that many people from different backgrounds, cultures, and countries feel connected in various ways to the Josephine charism has invited us to name what we experience and to recognize each other as part of something greater that sustains us and gives us identity. We have called this space the Josephite Family.

### **2.1. Being the Josephine Family**

We conceive of the Josephine Family as a space of belonging within which many people connected to the Josephine charism in different ways recognize themselves walking together, sharing values and horizons. In this space, relationships are woven, projects are promoted, and reality is transformed.

#### **2.1.1. Identity**

As in any group, the common identity shared among the members of the Josephine Family is expressed with varying degrees of commitment to the charism and in different ways of relating. Thus, the Siervas de San Jose and the Josephine laity live their belonging as a vocation, which is born of a spiritual experience and is projected into a mission, from which they build their life project. Other individuals, groups, or entities maintain their membership in the Josephine Family through their choice of values and practices that give meaning to their commitment to transforming reality in light of the charismatic mission. There are also individuals or groups who maintain their bond through adherence to an experience of faith that springs from the spiritual foundations that inspire the charism.

In various ways, all consciously live their belonging and commit themselves to strengthening the bonds and promoting the projects that are shared from each choice and experience.

#### **2.1.2. Who makes up the Josephine Family?**

- The Siervas de San Jose
- The Josephine Laity.
- People committed to the projects of the Congregation in varying degrees of identification and commitment to the Charism.

- People who want to live the Charism and promote it in some of its dimensions.
- People, groups, organizations, and movements that sympathize with the Charism, participate in events, but do not necessarily make a formal or long-term commitment.

### 2.1.3. Different ways of living as a Josephine Family

In the Josephine Family, we find various ways of living and participating in it, especially from the community or group:

- **Religious communities** of the Siervas de San Jose.
- **Mixed communities:** Siervas de San Jose and lay people who share life, mission, and goods.
- **Lay communities:** groups of lay people who meet from time to time to share their life and mission from the Josephine charism. They live their participation in the group in a spirit of shared responsibility.
- **Work community:** Groups of people who feel called within the same workplace to share the charismatic experience, not only through the project they promote or work on, but as a vital reality that shapes their lives and generates decision-making and choices that naturally permeate their work and team relationships.
- **Groups of adolescents and young people** who are part of youth ministry movements or other types of organizations that operate in the environment of the Siervas de San Jose.
- **Families** who want to live the charism together. They organize themselves, establish agreements and guidelines regarding their lifestyle, their way of sharing, their formation process, criteria for the use of goods, participation in the mission, and the creation of spaces for shared spirituality.
- **People** who feel part of the Josephine family by participating in its celebrations and gatherings.

## **2.2. Rooted in a charism**

We are a broad and diverse community of people, brought together by the prophetic and transformative power of the Josephine charism that has become present in the world through the life and choices of Bonifacia Rodríguez and Francisco Butinyá. From them, the charism has taken root in different places and has been embodied in the lives of many people and groups throughout its century and a half of existence.

Today, those of us who feel part of the Josephine Family share the desire and commitment to live and promote it from the places, styles, and choices that each of us discovers in life and from the commitment we have chosen. This plurality of views and perspectives enriches us as a Family and enables diverse paths from which to embody the prophetic and transformative power of the Josephine charism. But it also urges us to strengthen our bonds and our sense of belonging so that our action can be more effective and our presence in the different areas of life reflects who we are and how we want to live and act.

The Josephine charism is defined, in its entirety, as a proposal of spirituality and a horizon of mission. This proposal and this horizon are expressed in a set of values.

### **Values and meanings for living spirituality**

- Reference to Nazareth and the Founders in daily life.
- Identification with the values of Jesus in Nazareth: family life, work and prayer, simplicity and humility, justice and sharing, service and solidarity.
- Uniting prayer and work as a central feature of the charismatic experience.
- The promotion and evangelization of the working and impoverished world.
- The experience of work as a special place of encounter with God, of fraternity/sorority, solidarity, and identity.
- Care for people and for our Common Home.

## Values and meanings for living the mission

- Commitment to social justice, decent work, the dignity and empowerment of women, especially working women and youth at risk.
- Care and dedication to the most disadvantaged and excluded people in our society, seeking to transform reality.
- Circular functioning, horizontal relationships based on equality and inclusion.

### 2.3. What helps us live as a Josephine Family

Experience shows us that there are particularly significant spaces that support, build, and reinforce our experience and identity as a Josephine Family:

- *Spaces of common work and mission* that create fraternal bonds and identification with the Charism.
- *The welcoming relationship* among those who share the Charism in a family atmosphere of closeness and inclusive acceptance.
- *The growing knowledge of the individuals, groups, and communities* that are part of the Josephine family, who live the Charism, using means such as social networks that connect us.
- *Meetings* where we pray, share experiences, and discuss formative topics in an atmosphere of listening and trust.
- *Shared prayers, retreats, etc.*
- The sense of community and shared mission.
- Joint and ongoing formation, updating the Charism and reimagining strategies that address new challenges.
- Getting closer to the lives of our Founders, Bonifacia Rodríguez and Francisco Butinyà, and the legacy we have in transmitting the Charism.
- Joint celebration of feasts and commemorative dates that are part of the history and experiences of the Charism.

## 2.4. Challenges

The great gift that this represents for those of us who feel part of the Josephine Family makes us responsible for a journey in which we must face common challenges and questions. The most relevant are:

- Deepening our sense of being a Josephine family around the Charism.
- Delving deeper into the spirituality we have received and the mission we share.
- Creating spaces for circular organization and inclusive relationships of appreciation and trust in all areas and contexts.
- Reimagining, in synodality and joint search, the task of transmitting the Charism in a unified manner, with our own methodology and in an operational way.

### **3. CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK. Our place in the world**

The Josephine family has meaning and is shaped by a series of socio-historical realities that justify its existence and provide meanings that allow us to delve deeper and move forward in embodying the charism with its transformative and prophetic power.

#### **3.1. The poor and working world.**

The working world of the 21st century is marked by a time of uncertainty and change that directly affects the current situation. Although there have been global improvements in employment rates, the current outlook for the lowest strata of the population in all countries is characterized by the following trends:

Wages cannot compensate for the loss of purchasing power caused by high inflation.

Job insecurity, with most jobs being unstable, and a trend towards greater deregulation and lack of protection for workers.

Undervaluation of manual workers and simple jobs, leading to job insecurity and unemployment.

Technological transformation and the need for new skills. The impact of technology excludes those who do not have access to adequate training, particularly affecting those with fewer economic opportunities.

Global factors such as economic uncertainty and climate change have a direct impact on the most vulnerable workers.

#### **3.2. Women in the current context**

Although there have been advances in women's rights and conditions, there is still a long way to go to achieve full equality. Deep inequalities persist, especially depending on the country and socioeconomic level. Women face:

Clear discrimination in the workplace, such as the "glass ceiling," wage inequality, and a greater presence in low-skilled jobs.

The burden of unpaid domestic work. Many women are the sole breadwinners for their families, seeking the necessary resources and, above all, taking care of their children and elderly relatives. It is increasingly evident that the machismo that still remains in our societies leads to violence and abuse against women simply because they are women, particularly sexual violence and harassment in the workplace.

The Josephine Family is called to stand alongside the working and poor world, supporting their daily struggles for decent work. Alongside women, defending gender equality and their empowerment, so that they can have decent work and living conditions and enjoy the same rights and dignity as men, both genders being empowered in a more humanizing process.

### **3.3. The Church today**

Some important features that characterize the current moment of the Church and influence our journey as a Josephine Family, challenging our ways of relating and our horizons of mission:

- **Secularization**

In many parts of the world, especially in the West, society has been changing its relationship with religion, a phenomenon known as secularization. This has led to a distancing from religious practices, and Christianity faces the challenge of presenting its message in a relevant and meaningful way in a culture that often prioritizes the secular, the civil, and the non-religious. •

- **Crisis of credibility**

The Church has faced a series of credibility crises due to scandals related to various types of abuse by some members of the clergy and laity. The existence of clericalism, which marks much of the life of the Church, and the role of women in the Church are two other important factors that deepen this crisis. These events have affected trust in the institution and have led to internal questioning about transparency, accountability, and power structures within the Church.

- **Ecclesiology of communion**

This term defines a way of understanding and comprehending the Church itself (ecclesiology). Viewing it from the perspective of “communion” implies the participation and co-responsibility of all and is based on the doctrine of the “common priesthood of the baptized” which, according to Lumen Gentium (LG 10), all of us participate in the priesthood of Christ through the sacrament of Baptism. From there, we can consecrate ourselves, that is, offer our lives, living by faith, hope, and charity, and bearing witness to Christ through our works and words. Therefore, we are all priests and priestesses in the active participation of the whole people of God (SC 14), which should encompass the entire life of the Church. Pope John Paul II prophetically declared that the third millennium would belong to the laity. This was a challenge to the whole Church, because for almost the last 60 years, since the Second Vatican Council, the Church has not fully realized the inclusion of the laity in its life and mission, despite the numerous documents written on the subject.

- **Synodality**

Synodality, which comes from “Synod,” meaning to walk together, is also a way of understanding how, and from what perspective, we should build the Church as the People of God. Pope Francis called on lay people, religious, clergy, and bishops to walk together, to listen, to dialogue, and to discern important issues affecting the Church in this modern era. This approach involves greater participation by lay people in all areas where decisions are made, from parishes to the Vatican.

The Synod on Synodality, held between 2021 and 2024, convened by Pope Francis, is an example of this effort to include lay people by promoting greater co-responsibility, inclusion, equality, and circular relationships among participants in ecclesial life.

In a world marked by exclusion, inequality, polarization, and deinstitutionalization, synodality is perhaps the best contribution the Church can make to society, being a prophetic sign of communion in diversity and the building of the common good.

- **Charismatic families**

Since the Second Vatican Council, the charisms that inspired religious congregations (foundational charisms) have been recognized as “gifts” granted to the Church, not to each of them individually. “They are granted to a specific person, but they can also be shared by others and, in this way, they continue over time as a living and precious heritage, generating a particular spiritual affinity between people<sup>3</sup>.” They are gifts of the Spirit, integrated into the ecclesial body, from where they are channeled into an evangelizing impulse<sup>4</sup>.

A first stage in the journey of communion between religious and lay people initiated by the Institutes in some countries began under the name “Shared Mission.” It is not a process of simply “replacing” religious with lay people in apostolic institutions, nor is it merely “collaboration,” assistance, or cooperation; it is a whole Christian life committed to a project born of the charismatic experience of religious congregations.

For several years now, the expression “charismatic families” has been used. The charismatic family is a new figure in the ecclesial context of the Church, the People of God. It is not constituted around a religious institute; its central axis is the founding charism lived in different ways, and its purpose is service to the mission.

In the realm of religious life, we call “charismatic family” the group of Christian faithful, priests, consecrated persons, and lay people who are united under the same charism, referring to the same founder or foundress, the same spirituality, the same spirit, and a common mission. In some cases, it brings together several congregations, orders, and institutes.

Religious congregations are called to “enlarge the tent,” to form charismatic families in the service of the Gospel. Each founding charism is a source of identity and also a place of encounter with many other believers who are in tune with the same charism.

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<sup>1</sup> *ChL.24,3*

<sup>1</sup> *EG.130*

In the case of the Josephine Family, the Church's call invites us to return to our origins and to revalue the lay presence, so significant in our beginnings, within our religious family, according to the charism received from our founders, Bonifacia Rodríguez and Francisco Butiñá. The charism received is a gift from the Spirit of God, available to anyone who wants to embrace it as a way of life, and it is a light for all, especially for the working world.

### **3.4. The Siervas de San Jose and the laity.**

The term Josephine Family was first introduced in the Congregation of the Siervas de San Jose (SSJ) in 1987 in the Mission Document, which states: "Our charism has an expansive force that cannot be limited: collaborators, former students, Secular Josephine Missionary Association, Secular Josephine Spirituality, people we meet through friendships or family ties... The spirit of Nazareth was also given to them. The wave of expansion of our spirit will grow ever greater and, day by day, will incorporate new members into the Josephine Family."

In 2004, the 1st International Meeting of Lay Josephines-Siervas de San Jose was held in Salamanca (Spain). The laity then became more aware of what it means to share the same gift of charism from different life choices.

In defining their identity, they expressed that they lived their lay vocation in the Church as part of the Josephine Family.

The General Chapter of the Siervas de San Jose in 2005, after listening to the experiences of several representatives of the Josephine Laity who participated in this international meeting, chose to "move forward in the integration of the Siervas de San Jose and the Josephine Laity," inviting the Congregation to a "personal and communal involvement in the process of integration into the Josephine Family<sup>5</sup>."

The subsequent General Chapters of the SSJ in 2011 and 2017 continued to urge progress in integration based on reciprocity, autonomy, and equality, aware that the more people who are

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<sup>5</sup> *Mission Document* SSJ (1987), 201.

attuned to and committed to the charism and live in communion, the greater the impact will be on the world.

In August 2016, the second international meeting of Josephine Laity and Siervas de San Jose took place in Salamanca. At this meeting, the document "Josephine Laity Itinerary" was worked on, which consists of two parts. The first part defines the mission/vision, the dimensions through which the charism is shared, the principles for the integration of Servants/Lay People, and charismatic pedagogy. The second part defines the stages of the itinerary. A commission made up of Lay People and Servants of St. Joseph was appointed to develop the stages and give final shape to the document.

At the 2023 General Chapter, "it was noted that, in addition to the Josephite Laity groups in different countries, there are many people, including those who work in our projects, who in different ways have become connected to the charism and promote it in various ways. There are experiences of community, of common projects, of the drafting of some documents, and of multiple encounters with lay people: congregational celebrations, reflection meetings, formation meetings, etc."

Lay Josephines have participated in the last three General Chapters. In some areas, lay people have participated in assemblies and are also part of some commissions.

The formation of charismatic families is a reality that is emerging in many congregations, including that of the Siervas de San Jose. This observation urges us to broaden our horizons with regard to the charism.

The 2023 General Chapter itself makes a series of recommendations in this area, such as:

- Develop a common frame of reference for the Josephine Family.
- Promoting the joint participation of the Josephine Family in reimagining the task of transmitting the Charism.
- Forming a commission of SSJ and lay people to coordinate and accompany the consolidation of the Josephine Family.

- Seeking strategies and specifying actions to bring together people who feel attracted to being part of the Family.

That is why, in 2024, in response to these indications, a Josephine Family commission was formed, made up of SSJs and lay people from the countries where the charism is present through the various platforms of the congregation.

The commission was created with the main objective of developing the Reference Framework and laying the foundations for a common organization of the Josephine Family.

## **4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK. Living by promoting charisma**

### **4.1. Our origins, a Home and a Workshop**

The Josephine charisma, which is both a gift and a task, has the Workshop of Nazareth as its spiritual space. The Workshop of Nazareth encompasses a spiritual practice that is “Work Harmonized with Prayer” in daily life and is rooted in the tradition of the first Siervas de San Jose who in the 19th century, in addition to distinguishing themselves as religious women and workers, something strange and revolutionary for the time, did so as prayerful manual laborers, together with other working women. In their time, they realized the importance of not separating the workplace from the spiritual space, driven by the daily effort to build a home and a workshop, in the style of Jesus, Joseph, and Mary in a forgotten village in Galilee called Nazareth. Therefore, the spiritual experience that sustains the “Workshop of Nazareth” is designed based on the Gospel accounts that recall the years Jesus lived in Nazareth with his family. The values that emanate from this experience define relationships, bonds, areas of coexistence, the type of organization we want for our social, political, and spiritual life, and our modes of existential commitment.

Today, for the Josephine Family, the Workshop is more than a physical space; *it is a way of being, living, and acting, based on the Josephine charism*, to be active subjects in the transformation of the present<sup>6</sup>.

### **4.2. A spirituality that nourishes existence: Josephine spirituality**

Josephine spirituality is a way of relating to God. It consists of living the experience of Jesus of Nazareth in our daily lives, looking to Jesus, uniting prayer and work with all those whom God places on our path.

"To contemplate Jesus of Nazareth in the midst of our work is to make him our companion in our daily tasks, to listen to him, to pay attention to him, and to converse with him, from this continuous attempt to feel him in our lives with calmness and without hurried haste. There are

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<sup>6</sup>Taller Modelo Operativo SSJ (1993), 5-6.

rushes that, even in the midst of movement, keep us balanced, but there are other rushes that overwhelm us, fill us with anxiety, divide us, and take us away from our center, from our spirit. This is the hurried rush.

As we develop our spirituality, we become aware of the charism and internalize it within ourselves. Spirituality thus becomes a meeting place based on an experience that enhances our inner life and strengthens the meaning we give to our existence. For those of us who are part of the Josephine Family, Jesus of Nazareth is a central reference point because he bears witness to “a way of being a person who grows and develops in daily life, in contact with his neighbors and his family, who knew how to build healthy and lasting relationships, who knew how to face difficult moments, enjoy celebrations, and discover God who accompanies his people, sustains them, and saves them <sup>7</sup>.”

The existential values that emanate from the life of Jesus of Nazareth sustain our way of living relationships, bonds, areas of coexistence, the type of organization we want for our social, political, and spiritual life, and our ways of engaging with reality<sup>8</sup>.

**Life in Nazareth** was for Jesus a space and a time of learning, where he grew up within his family group, inserted in a simple and poor village. Deeply rooted in his culture, he welcomed the mystery into his life and shaped his choices in the light of an experience of a God who liberates and saves. His life in Nazareth determined his way of facing reality, of welcoming daily events, and of understanding the great questions of his time. Nazareth thus becomes, for the Josephine Family, an icon of a way of living, working, and transforming reality.

Working from this perspective means continuing what Jesus did in Nazareth, together with Joseph and Mary, in a specific way: **Harmonizing prayer and work**. Today we do the same thing that Jesus did in his time with Joseph and Mary, alongside relatives and neighbors, co-workers, friends and collaborators, groups, organizations or movements that share and promote the charism, spirituality and mission in various ways.

<sup>7</sup> *Our Charism . Memory and prophecy. Part 2...*,48.fr

<sup>8</sup> *CARME SOTO VARELA, The Charism:: origenes, identity, esentiale elements (2015). Cfr. Our Charism. Memory and prophecy. Part 2: The prophecy of our present (2018), 46-47.*

“Uniting prayer and work” is, in the Josephine charism, a sign of community identity, with a vocation to offer an alternative proposal for the times we live in. It arises from a choice of faith and is projected into daily life as a dynamic element of commitment to transforming unjust relationships and structures, starting from small alternative spaces that are a sign and horizon of something better. It also means allowing ourselves to be challenged by the God of Jesus in Nazareth, becoming his followers in our daily lives, preventing prayer from becoming a mere ascetic exercise. It means encountering God in the very human space of work and not allowing it to become a burden, a commodity, or even less a place of oppression, but rather a place where we can realize our values and create more humane communities<sup>9</sup>.

#### **4.3. A mission to make utopia possible, the evangelization of the poor and working world**

Assuming the charism as the core of the Josephine family entails living out our commitment to the mission. The mission is a life choice, a vocational approach that assumes living the charism from the richness of the complementarity of the different vocations and life situations of the people who make up the Josephine Family.

Our Mission commits us to the evangelization and promotion of the working poor, especially the dignification and empowerment of women. This is a shared mission, open and inclusive, in partnership with individuals, organizations, movements, and institutions of different cultures and faith traditions, broadening and making our response more effective.

We carry out the mission through:

- Our daily and transformative work, our family and social life. Being “leaven in the dough,” transformers of reality within the world of work from the work itself, united with prayer, taking Jesus, Mary, and Joseph in Nazareth as our reference point.

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<sup>9</sup> Cfr. *Our Charism. Memory and prophecy Part 2...*, 48-53.

- Being present in areas where women are discriminated against and/or mistreated, defending gender equality, equal rights, and the right to work.
- Participating in projects and/or movements that support and defend decent work and denounce discrimination and violence.

In this way, we continue to bring to life the Mission that Francisco Butinyà and Bonifacia Rodríguez began in the 19th century with the women of their time.

#### **4.4. Our charismatic references: Bonifacia Rodríguez and Francisco X. Butinyà**

In the 19th century, in the midst of the Industrial Revolution in Salamanca, Spain, there was a female artisan, a manual laborer named Bonifacia Rodríguez, and a Jesuit priest, Francisco Butinyà, who founded a new religious congregation, the Servants of St. Joseph, whose central focus was to unite work with prayer in a single spiritual movement they called “Twinning Prayer and Work.” This spiritual movement sought an encounter with God and with others as a driving force for personal and social transformation, especially within the female working world of the time. The “mystical” ideal of Bonifacia Rodríguez and Francisco Butinyà was to live in the style of a God incarnate in Jesus, a craftsman from a small town called Nazareth, who, together with his parents, Joseph and Mary, carried out his work, uniting it with prayer. This workplace and spiritual space called the Workshop of Nazareth is a light for the world of work.

## 5. STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION.

### 5.1. Why organize ourselves in a specific way as a Josephine family?

In a structure, each element has a specific function and a correlation with the other elements that compose it. To begin the journey, we designed a simple, flexible structure that helps to strengthen the Josephine family as a space for experiencing and transmitting the charism.

In our daily lives, we ask ourselves where we live the Josephine charism, the identifying traits that give value to what we do, and what organizational methods allow us to freely live the charism within this Family.

We found the need to:

- Form ourselves so that we can internalize the charism in depth and transmit it with greater fidelity.
- Create internal communication channels that connect us and bind us even more closely as a charismatic family.
- Organize and manage animation teams, with leaders who promote life and mission in pursuit of greater unity as a Josefina Family.

In the consultation carried out in 2024, we discovered the perspectives and challenges that form the basis of this organizational proposal for our Family. We found three important dimensions that we must take into account in our journey as a Josephine **Family: Formation, Communication, and Animation**. All three must be promoted from the spaces of organization and coordination that we provide for ourselves.

### 5.2. Formation

We aspire to experiential, joint, and ongoing formation that helps to update the expressions of the Charism and to reimagine strategies that address new challenges.

As a result of the consultation, the priority themes of the formation proposal for the Josephine Family are:

- Knowledge, reflection, and deepening of the charism and the charismatic elements that identify it.
- Knowledge, reflection, and deepening of the life and work of our founders: Bonifacia Rodríguez and Francisco Butinyà.
- Spirituality of daily life.

The methodology must start from life and be projected into life.

It is advisable to have a virtual Josephine formation center.

### **5.3. Communication**

“We live in a deeply interconnected world which, while it has great risks, also brings us closer to diversity, invites us to interculturality, opens us to see reality beyond our own perspective, and makes us aware of the historical roots of our traditions, visions, and behaviors that are different from others.<sup>10</sup>”

Communications within the Josephine Family, from the point of view of strategic communication, should seek to establish internal and external communication networks and channels that serve to spread the life and mission of the Josephine Family and transmit the Josephine charism in all physical or virtual spaces to which we have access.

We must connect through networks and in person at meetings with other local, regional, and international Josephine Family realities. We must promote experimental formats that facilitate living different modes of relationship virtually. To this end, we will have internal and external communication channels.

### **5.4. Animation**

The Josephine Family needs to be experienced as a space for growth where charism and mission are embodied in everyday life. Hence, it needs animation that:

- Strengthens emotional and spiritual bonds through the experience of charism.

<sup>10</sup> *Cfr. Our Charism Memory and prophecy . Part 2..., 38.*

- Encourages collaboration and a participatory approach in the life of the different spaces to promote our Mission.
- Promotes the values of Nazareth and maintains identity.
- Creates inclusive dynamics in different areas.
- Facilitates celebrations and meetings on relevant holidays.

### **5.5. A circular organizational structure**

Our Josephine Family needs a minimal organization that responds to our values, charism, and the lifestyle we want to promote, which is why we seek more circular and horizontal models.

The circular organizational structure aims to encourage and generate spaces for participation, co-responsibility, and inclusive relationships of appreciation and trust in all areas and contexts of the Josephine Family in a dynamic, systemic, and circular way, understanding circular to mean a non-vertical type of structure.

This type of structure emphasizes collaboration, open communication, and the participation of all members of the organization in decision-making.

This organizational culture requires leaders who, in the style of Nazareth, can accompany processes of growth, strengthen relationships among the members of the Josephine Family, encourage everyone to drink from the same charism, and foster co-responsibility for the mission.

Based on the feedback received in the 2024 consultation, we will promote the following areas of coordination for the organizational structure of the Josephine Family:

- International level.
- Regional level (several countries) / National level.
- Local Level.

A coordinating team will be established to encourage life and mission in each of the areas described.

## **5.6. International Team**

Composed of representatives from the different countries where the Josephine Family is present and, ideally, from the different branches of the Family (SSJ, Josephine laity, representatives of other groups/entities, platforms, etc.).

With a term of at least three years, to achieve stability in the team's work and consolidate it.

Within the team, it would be important to have a person who assumes leadership/coordination of the team. In addition, it would be necessary to have the right people to encourage the following functions:

- Promote joint formation for all through a common formation itinerary and materials for this purpose.
- Articulate internal communication channels and coordinate with national teams.
- Enable common external communication channels to give visibility to the Josephine Family, its life, and its Mission
- Coordinate actions among national teams in the different areas of Formation and Communication
- Encourage common Mission projects, managing channels and alliances for project development
- Systematize reports, accounts, charismatic experiences, and mission experiences
- Organize international meetings, either in person or virtually.

## **5.7. Regional/National Team**

The national team would primarily have a role of coordinating activities and animating the life of the Family in each country.

It will be composed of people belonging to local teams, preferably representing areas of origin, geography, but also membership (SSJ, Laity, foundations, other platforms). The period of activity we propose is no less than 3 years, chosen taking into account the functions to be performed:

- Coordinate joint actions between local teams.

- Implement the Itineraries, common formation activities of the Josephine Family.
- Promote formation activities specific to the country.
- Foster communication between the different local teams and presences in the country, as well as with other countries and the international team.
- Promote external communication (social media, website) of the activities and projects of the Josephine Family in the country.
- Organize regional/national meetings.
- Support local teams in: Formation, Communication, and Animation.

### **5.8. Local Team**

Local teams may be made up of people from different areas of the Josephine Family, with the capacity to carry out the following functions:

- Internal communication between the different local groups.
- Facilitate formation activities/spaces.
- Animation and organization of meetings, retreats, prayers, festivities, and spaces for accompaniment at the local level.
- Coordination with the national/regional team.

## 6. Final words

It should be noted that this text is not intended to be a conclusion, but rather an open door to new ways of living, sharing, and deepening the charism that unites us.

The common framework offered here is not meant to make us uniform, but rather to strengthen our unity in diversity. We are united by a rich spiritual heritage that springs from our founders and that we wish to embody in our concrete history. It calls us to recognize ourselves as part of the same family, to walk in communion, and to discern together how to respond, from our charism, to the challenges of today's world.

We know that this framework is not static. The Spirit continues to blow. Therefore, we welcome this text as a living instrument, which should be read, prayed over, reviewed, and updated over time. May each person, community, or group make it their own, adapting it to their reality, without losing sight of the common source that nourishes us.

We hope that the foundations laid by this document will help to build this Josephine Family. May they provide a more concrete path to spaces and structures of encounter that do not constrain but rather support and promote the life of the Josephine Family.

Finally, from the commission that has prepared this framework document, we would like, first of all, to thank all the people, Servants of St. Joseph and lay people, for the journey we have made together and for their active participation in its preparation. We have tried to involve all those who are already part of the Josephine Family.

We are called to build together a culture of encounter, where being Josephine is not only a personal lifestyle, but a living network of people and groups who proclaim the good news of the gospel of work.

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