

DECREE

URBIS ET ORBIS

As Almighty God appointed Joseph son of the Patriarch Jacob over all the land of Egypt to save corn for the people, so when the fulness of time was come, and He was about to send on earth His only-begotten Son, the Saviour of the world, He chose another Joseph of whom the first Joseph had been the type, and whom He made the Lord and chief of His household and possession and guardian of His choicest treasures. So also He espoused to Himself the Immaculate Virgin Mary, of whom was born by the Holy Ghost Jesus Christ Our Lord, who has before men deigned to be reputed the Son of Joseph, and was subject unto him. And Him, so many Kings and Prophets had desired to see, Joseph not only saw, but conversed with and embraced with paternal affection, and kissed, and most sedulously nourished, even Him whom the faithful were to receive as the Bread that came down from Heaven, that they might obtain eternal life. On account of this sublime dignity which God conferred on His most faithful servant, the Church has always most highly honoured and praised the most Blessed Joseph next to his Spouse, the Virgin Mother of God, and has besought his intercession in times of trouble. And now that in these most troublous times the Church is beset by enemies on every side, and is weighed down by heavy calamities, so that ungodly men imagine the gates of hell to have at length prevailed against her, therefore, the Venerable Prelates of the Catholic world have presented to the Sovereign Pontiff their own petitions and those of the Faithful committed to their charge, praying that he would vouchsafe to constitute Saint Joseph Patron of the Catholic Church. They also renewed still more earnestly this their prayer and desire at the Sacred OEcumenical