

December 27, 2020

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Sir 3:2-6, 12-14
or Gn 15:1-6; 21:1-3

Col 3:12-21
or Col 3:12-17
or Heb 11:8, 11-12, 17-19

Lk 2:22-40
or Lk 2:22, 39-40

GROW: Remember when COVID-19 first either forced us together or apart last spring? For most people, this meant a radical change in our family's usual circumstances. Perhaps we've had too much togetherness? Or we've been kept apart? Whatever our experience, the Feast of the Holy Family in the midst of the Christmas season is a poignant reminder that families are the bedrock of our faith; a domestic Church; the primary transmitter of the faith. Jesus, God's promise fulfilled for us, both fully human and fully divine, was born into a human family. We are to imitate the Holy Family through sacrificial love for one another. Sirach speaks of the honor and respect that children and parents must have for one another. And while we are not divine, we can celebrate the Divine presence in our midst, as Simeon did in today's Gospel, when he said: "Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in sight of all the peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel."

GO: I like to joke that at times, lately, it seems that our family is "apart together." My husband takes the family-room sectional, my teen sons hunker down in their rooms, and I grab the swivel chair in the living room. And so we instituted "Forced Family Fun" Sundays, albeit with mixed success. Yet, these activities make a difference. They remind us how to be family. Today, as we honor the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, let us take a moment to remember that all families are called to be holy. Families are meant to be refuges of unity and peacefulness in an imperfect, sometimes harsh world. As members of a family, we are called to be patient and kind with one another. Let us pray for the grace to emulate the Holy Family. Like us, they certainly faced their challenges and disappointments, and yet they listened to God's voice in their lives and followed his will. Pray to Mary and St. Joseph for their intercession, and trust in the presence of God in your family.

STUDY: Extra-credit opportunity! The Church gives us several options for the readings for the feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Quiet your mind and heart and read them all. See what insights the Holy Spirit may have in store for you and your family.