

Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

December 27, 2021

From the desk of Fr. Paulo ofm cap.

A heartfelt Mele Kalikimaka and Happy Feast of the Holy Family!

On this Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph we consecrate our families to God seeking God the Father's loving guidance and protections through the Holy Family.

It was back in **1921 that Pope Benedict XV** formally established this Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph in the Church as liturgical feast. The primary purpose of this feast was to present the Holy Family as a model for Christian families.

Thus, to strengthen Christian families in the face of rising secular onslaught of materialism and upheaval of political systems affecting families in the aftermath of World War I.

Some of us might ask after all these years, is feast still relevant to us in the year 2021 and at the beginning of 2022? Indeed, I believe the feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph in truly timely in our present age.

We are not only bombarded with secularism, materialism and godlessness prevailing in all walks of our society - nation, but ever overtly hostility against God and Faith.

How are our Christian families to do and survive, rather to thrive and grow facing such daunting challenges in our time? The answer is the Holy Family! Husbands imitate be like St. Joseph, a man of God! Mothers imitate and be like Mary the Mother of Jesus, and children should look at Jesus Christ and how he lived in the humble home in Nazareth and willingly toil with his hands and obeyed His foster father Joseph and Mary His Mother.

We live in the time when moral relativism has become the norm and thus it seems that each person creates his or her **"own god" in their image,**" according to what pleases and suits their lifestyles. So many of us have forgotten that **"we are not gods, but we are created in God's image."**

Jesus Christ instituted the Catholic Church upon the foundations of the Apostles and through the Catholic Church instituted the Sacraments to sanctify and make us truly more and more into the image God has intended we become while on this earthly sojourn to heaven.

Sister Lucia stated that **"our final battle with Satan"** will be fought over the family and marriage. Truly two foundational pillars of the Church and even of our society and nation.

No one can deny today that the epic battle is taking place in the arena of Marriage and Family. That forces against marriage and family as God has established are being attacked and being dismantled and reinvented. That the forces of the world are restructuring the foundations of the marriage and family life into their own image and not of God.

We consecrate all our families to the protection and intercession of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph on this Feast Day. We pray that fathers be like St. Joseph and mothers be like Mary and that families both under single parents or parents of father and mother be blessed for their faithfulness to the Gospel- Jesus Christ.

MANY to EXTEND OUR MAHALO NUI LOA

Mahalo nui loa to the parishioners who prepared the parish church, both inside and outside for the Solemn Feast of Christmas. Without your generosity with **Time and Talents** all these preparations would not have taken place and such beautiful celebration of Christmas and Holy Season would not have been possible!

CONSECRATION and DEDICATION of PARISH FAMILIES

On the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, the head of the household of each family made the consecration and dedication of their respective family at all the masses.

Congratulations for placing your family into the protection and intercession of the Holy Family. We will do this act of consecration and dedication once every month.

PRAYERS for the SICK and HOMEBOUND

We extend our mahalo nui loa to so many of your prayers and good wishes that were extended toward Lucy while in Kaiser Permanente. Though she is still unable to return physically to the Parish Office she is back home and buzzing about.

Also keep in your prayers our parishioners who are aged, ill, battling cancer or covid. We pray in a special way for Rachel Kinsey (MaryPat Kinsey's daughter) who is gravely ill in the mainland.

God bless you all!

Have a Blessed Week in the Lord!

Fr. Paulo ofm cap.

LOOKING AHEAD:

NEW YEAR JANUARY 1, 2022 - SOLEMNITY of MARY the MOTHER of GOD

YEAR 2022 New Year's Day, January 1st falls perfectly on First Saturday. We will have the traditional 9:00am Mass for the **Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God**, entrusting the coming year 2022 into the hands of our Blessed Mother.

The Rosary will be prayed at 8:30am before the Mass. All parishioners are invited!

January 1st. Vigil Mass 4:30pm

January 2nd Sunday Masses: 7:00am 8:30am and 10:00am

January 8th Saturday, 7:00am Mass, 4:00pm confessions & 4:30pm Vigil Mass

January 9th Sunday Masses, 7:00am, 8:30am and 10:00am

MONTH of JANUARY 2022 EUCHARISTIC ADORATION.

Our Eucharistic Adoration will take place **Tuesday, January 4th starting with 8:30am Mass** followed by the hourly adoration.

9am – 10am	10am – 11am	11am – 12noon	12noon – 1:pm	1pm – 2:pm
2pm – 3pm	3pm – 4:pm	4pm Closing Benediction		

Scripture Reflections

Old Testament: Sirach 3: 2-6; 12-14

Background Context.

The author the Book of Sirach was a pious Jew who lived in the second century B.C. He had made a deep study of the law and the revealed religion of his people, and move by the love of God, of his Law, and of his religion, he wrote a collection of wise maxims to help others live a life pleasing to God. In the verses read to ay he speaks of the family.

For the Lord sets a father: In God's plan for the spread of the human race, the family unit has its foundation. The father has the place of honor and the right to respect and obedience.

A mother's authority he confirms: The mother shares the authority with the father in the home. It is God's will and decree that their authority be respected by the children.

He who honors his father is gladden by children: The son or daughter who respects his parents will in turn be respected by his own children.

When he prays, he is heard: Because he is pleasing to God, his prayers will be answered.

He who reveres his father: he obeys the Lord who brings comfort to his mother: The children who respect and obey their parents are doing God's will and are thereby giving glory to God and storing the spiritual rewards for themselves.

A long life: A long life was looked on as a divine blessing. It is that, if properly lived. The longer we can work for God and in this life the greater the reward in heaven.

He obeys the Lord who brings comfort to his mother: The obedient child is a comfort and a source of joy for his mother (and father). He will be obedient to his parents if he is obedient to God. This is one of God's commandments.

My son take care of your father when he is old: It is in his later days a father needs the loving care of his children. Natural instinct and decency would demand this of children, but a greater authority still, the divine will demands this of them.

Grieve him not as long as you live: What greater grief could a father have in his old age than to have raised a son of whom he has to be ashamed. The child who has learned to respect his parents is respecting God and will never cause his parents to be ashamed of him.

If his mind fails, be considerate with him: No matter how feeble, mentally, or physically, one's parent may become, it is the children's duty to care for them. Those parents, when they had their health and strength devoted their energies to their children, the children must now do their part.

For kindness to a father will not be forgotten: God will repay the dutiful child. The kindness he shows his parents in their need is as good and better than any sacrifices he can offer in the Temple. If he displeases God by neglecting his duty to his parents, no sacrifice of his can be acceptable to God.

It will serve as a sin offering-it will take lasting root: The full effects of obedience and respect for parents will have a lasting effect on the character of the child and its reward will be everlasting.

New Testament: Colossians 3: 12 - 21

Background Context.

It was Epaphras, a disciple of St. Paul, who preached the Christian message in the town of Colossae. St. Paul took keen interest in the work of his disciple. While a prisoner in Rome Epaphras came to visit him and told him his converts were being disturbed by false teachers.

St. Paul wrote a letter to Colossians encouraging them to persevere in the true faith based on the solid foundation of Christ's divinity and to keep on living a true Christian life according to the teaching of Christ preached to them by Epaphras.

St. Paul gave them some very practical rules for an ideal Christian life, a few of which have been read to us today.

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience: These Christian virtues so necessary in a community must be in their heart, part and parcel of themselves, in accepting Christianity they accepted a new life.

Forgiving one another: Even Christians could forget their Christian obligations and injure their neighbor but the injured one must always be ready to forgive the offender.

As the Lord has forgiven you: The Lord wiped out all their sins in baptism and is ever ready to wash away the sins of a repentant sinner. The true Christian must willingly forgive a repentant brother or a sister.

And over all these put-on loves that is the bond of perfection: The virtues mentioned above are compared to new garments which are put on, but the final outer garment which binds and keeps the others in place is charity, true Christian love.

And the peace of Christ control your hearts: Jesus Christ is the source of unity, harmony and peace, his followers form one community, one body, with Christ as its head.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as in all wisdom: Christians must not only know the doctrine of Jesus Christ, but they must also live it and produce fruits worthy of it.

You teach and admonish one another: One member must help the other as in the human body.

Do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus: Because they are members of Christ's body, their every act has a divine value, it is as members of Christ Body that they honor God the Father, their acts give special honor to him.

Wives, be subordinate to your husbands, as is proper in the Lord: St. Paul gets down to details now. The Christian faith is lived in the Christian home, by each members doing his or her duty. It is duty that is stressed here not rights. As **“the husband is head of the wife, as Christ is head of the Church” Ephesians 5:23**, the wife must be subject to him, but in no servile way, it is a loving subjection for the good of the family.

Husbands, love your wives and avoid all bitterness toward them: this may sound common place today but in the pagan world of St. Paul’s time wives were little more than property, they were the property of the husband and were often treated as such and harshly. Christianity changed all that.

Children obey your parents in everything, for this is pleasing to the Lord: The family circle is God’s place for the spread of the human race. God could have created and could continue to create human beings in the prime of life, each one capable of running his own life. God chose the better way; we can rest assured.

Parents have the responsibility of preparing their children to take their place in life, and what wonder virtues are developed in parents because of this responsibility. Children on the other hand, have their obligations as soon as they come to the use of reason, the basic obligation of which is obedience to their parent. Through this obedience they will learn to take their place in life more in important still it is through this obedience they will learn to obey God an reach eternal life.

Fathers do not provoke your children, so they may not become discouraged: Fathers and mothers too must teach their children to obey not out of fear but out of love and respect. Obedience given out of fear is not rue obedience an dis not a training for the child’s future life. A loving interest in the child’s true welfare must be the motive behind every command and every reprimand.

Gospel: Luke 2: 41-52

Background Context.

Each year Jesus’s parents went to Jerusalem: Luke has already explained that Jesus had no human father (**Luke 1: 26-38**), therefore Joseph was his foster-father only, so he calls Mary and Joseph Jesus’ parents here, knowing he will not be misunderstood.

The Feast of the Passover: The feast which commemorated the liberation of the Chosen People from Egypt. All men who were able were expected to go to Jerusalem for the feast and for two others, if living not too far from, the city. Mary went regularly with Joseph although not

strictly bound, and they had the boy Jesus with them on this occasion and perhaps on previous occasions too.

The boy Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem: At first it seems surprising that he did not tell them, but the incident had evidently the purpose of impressing on them that his mission from his heavenly Father to whom his first obedience was due, came before everything.

Among relatives and acquaintances: The people from distant towns traveled in groups, the women preceding their men. A boy of that age could be either with the women or could be with the men. It was only when they camped for the night that they families got together, and it was only when Mary and Joseph realized that the boy was missing.

After three days they found him in the temple: That is on the third day. Joseph and Mary could not travel back the night they missed Jesus it took another dull day to reach Jerusalem, so it was the third day when they found him.

Sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions: The Scribes and Teachers would gather in one of the halls near the Temple to discuss the Law and the Prophets. On the great feast days, like the Passover, Rabbis and others would come to them with problems. A boy of twelve who knew so much about these theological problems was an unusual phenomenon surely. No wonder **“they were amazed at his understanding and his answers.”** They had no idea who or what he was.

I must be in my Father’s house: Mary knew from the angel’s message that the Annunciation (**Luke 1: 26 – 38**), that Jesus was a special child, the promised Messiah in fact and she had surely told Joseph. So, they did know this, but they did not expect him to be in his mission at this tender age; actually, this was not the beginning of his Messianic mission but only a slight foretaste of what was to come. Jesus allowed them to grieve over his loss to prepare them, especially his Mother, for greater sorrows that were to come. Hitherto Joseph was called his father, but he reminds them now that his real heavenly Father’s business comes before any earthly ties.

He went down with them and came to Nazareth and was obedient to them: For the next eighteen years Jesus lived the humble life of a carpenter’s son, and as a carpenter in his turn, in the unknown village of Nazareth, obedient to Joseph (while Joseph lived) and to Mary. We are told nothing more about his “hidden life” in Nazareth, but there is a very complete description in these few words: **“subject to them.”**

His mother kept all these things in her heart: Every mother cherishes in her memory the chief incidents in her child’s infancy and youth especially if an only child. Would such a Mother of

such a Son forget? St. Luke hints here at the source of his information concerning the infancy of Jesus.

Jesus advanced in wisdom: Jesus got his human knowledge and information like every other child but got it to a greater degree because his diligence and obedience.

And age: The Greek word used by St. Luke has two meanings. To say he advanced in age with the years is **tautology (a phrase or expression in which the same thing is said twice in different words).**

And favor before God and man: That is Jesus found favor with God and men and he continued to increase their favor daily because he always did what was right in the sight of God and his neighbors. Jesus grew in all ways, physically, intellectually, and spiritually for the work that lay ahead of him.

Application to Life.

Someone once remarked to me, **“Father it may have been easier for the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph to have lived such a holy life as a family. After all St. Joseph was a saint, Mary was the sinless Mother of God and Jesus is the Son of God. They would have had all the graces of God at hand to live a holy life as a family.”**

I paused for few moments and then I answered that it is true, **“that St. Joseph was a saint, Mary was sinless Mother of God, and Jesus is the Son of God. But one important thing you may have forgotten is that the Holy Family lived the earthly life in the fullness of what it was to be a human family.”**

What I meant was that each member of the Holy Family, not only knew but personally experienced in their life what it is to be a human person and as a member of a human family with all its limitations and all the sorrows and joys that are part of being a human person.

Each of them experienced the poverty, even lacking the necessity, such as a decent shelter at the birth of Jesus Christ. Then the frightful flight in the depth of the night to the alien land of Egypt, not knowing at all what lay ahead.

Coming back to Israel but then lived in the small town of Nazareth, inconspicuous to the eyes of the world that the Son of God was in their midst. Hard labor they all knew and experienced and possessing so little was their lot as a family.

Of course, when Jesus was presented in the Temple and when Simeon prophesized, **“Simeon bless them (Mary and Joseph) said to Mary his mother, Behold, this child is destined for the**

fall and rise of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be contradicted and you yourself a sword will pierce so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed, ” Luke 2: 34 – 35.

Simeon prophesized that the life laid ahead of the infant child Jesus was one of the Cross and that His Mother will intimately share it.

Imagined when young child Jesus just 12 years old was **“lost in Jerusalem?”** what horror must have gripped the hearts of Joseph (foster father) and Mary, the Mother? All parents who ever lost a child know this personally and I have witnessed it so many times in my ministry as a priest. What unspeakable and what unimaginable anguish and suffering it is for a father or a mother to lose his or her child.

This **year 2021**, I had officiated the funerals of 2 children who died unexpectedly and in such untimely manner. One was just a 9-year-old girl the other a grown single woman and both died unexpectedly and left a mother and a father deeply grieving in brokenness. At the grave site, the pain felt by the parents were almost tangible and tears that flowed from the crushed hearts of the parents moved everyone present into deep sorrow and tears.

Amazing it that our Gospel reading from **Luke 2: 41 – 52** is the story of the **“lost child Jesus”** and the unimaginable sorrow of the hearts of Mary and Joseph is proclaimed on this Feast of the Holy Family.

Did we expect to hear about the joys and successes of the Holy Family since they were comprised of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, such blessed people, and Son of God in their midst?

God the Father willed that those whom He loved so dearly should also fully enter the human sufferings and lived it, not alone but with all the graces God will provide. Yes, somehow when one is drawn to God it seems that we are drawn to **the Cross** first and we may ask why?

The answer though insufficient is that **the Cross** is the heart of God’s Love for us. Wouldn’t we even as humans with all the frailties, when we are loved, we want the lover to love even our most weak and vulnerable self? Thus, realizing we are truly loved for who we are?

This coming **Year 2022**, despite the cloud of Covid still hanging over us, let us recall how much we are loved by God the Father and at what price we were redeemed? That the Son of God became flesh and born and lived among us and all through his life as Jesus faced opposition and sufferings he never gave up, because he loved us to the end?

Should we allow some inconveniences of life and our inclination to be complaisant make us **“walk away from God?”** The tragedy in the life of a Christian is that he or she never may walk away from God in full intent but gradually by the choices one makes in daily life, slowly drifts away, **“like unsuspecting swimmer being carried unaware by the slow-moving undertow current sweeping him or her further and further out into the treacherous deep sea.”**

When one weekend of the Lord's Day (Vigil/Sunday Mass) become burdensome and skipped, when assisting the faith life of the Church in Time, Talent and Treasure are felt like loss and when we begin to feel as though it just now, and tomorrow we will correct our slack, we are all in grave danger of loosing our precious Faith. Perhaps Jesus' poignant words are addressed to our generation, to our time, and to us. **"...But when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?" Luke 18:8.**