

The Living Word

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, Year A

28 December 2025

First Reading Sir 3:2-6. 12-14

Whoever fears the Lord honours his parents.

The Lord honours the father in his children, and upholds the rights of a mother over her sons.

Whoever respects his father is atoning for his sins,

he who honours his mother is like someone amassing a fortune.

Whoever respects his father will be happy with children of his own, he shall be heard on the day when he prays. Long life comes to him who honours his father,

he who sets his mother at ease is showing obedience to the Lord.

My son, support your father in his old age, do not grieve him during his life.

Even if his mind should fail, show him sympathy,

do not despise him in your health and strength;

for kindness to a father shall not be forgotten

but will serve as reparation for your sins.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 127:1-5. R. see v.1

(R.) Happy are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways.

1. O blessed are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways!
By the labour of your hands you shall eat.
You will be happy and prosper. *(R.)*
2. Your wife like a fruitful vine
in the heart of your house;
your children like shoots of the olive,
around your table. *(R.)*
3. Indeed thus shall be blessed
the man who fears the Lord.
May the Lord bless you from Zion
all the days of your life. *(R.)*

Second Reading Col 3:12-21

Concerning the Christian life in the world.

You are God's chosen race, his saints; he loves you and you should be clothed in sincere compassion, in kindness and humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one another; forgive each other as soon as a quarrel begins. The Lord has forgiven you; now you must do the same. Over all these clothes, to keep them together and complete them, put on love. And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, because it is for this that you were called together as parts of one body. Always be thankful.

Let the message of Christ, in all its richness, find a home with you. Teach each other,

and advise each other, in all wisdom. With gratitude in your hearts sing psalms and hymns and inspired songs to God; and never say or do anything except in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Wives, give way to your husbands, as you should in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and treat them with gentleness. Children, be obedient to your parents always, because that is what will please the Lord. Parents, never drive your children to resentment or you will make them feel frustrated.

Gospel Acclamation Col 3:15. 16

Alleluia, alleluia!

*May the peace of Christ rule in your hearts,
and the fullness of his message live within you.*

Alleluia!

Gospel Mt 2:13-15.19-23

Take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt.

After the wise men had left, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother with you, and escape into Egypt, and stay there until I tell you, because Herod intends to search for the child and do away with him.' So Joseph got up and, taking the child and his mother with him, left that night for Egypt, where he stayed until Herod was dead. This was to fulfil what the Lord had spoken through the prophet:

I called my son out of Egypt.

After Herod's death, the angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother with you and go back to the land of Israel, for those who wanted to kill the child are dead.' So Joseph got up and, taking the child and his mother with him, went back to the land of Israel. But when he learnt that Archelaus had succeeded his father Herod as ruler of Judaea he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he left for the region of Galilee. Here he settled in a town called Nazareth. In this way the words spoken through the prophets were to be fulfilled:

He will be called a Nazarene.



Reflection by Dianne Bergant CSA

All of the major themes found in today's readings highlight the relational character of family life. In Sirach some of the dynamics of family living and responsibility as exercised in the ancient world unfold before our eyes. The rewards of faithfully observing these family codes are showcased in the responsorial Psalm. Paul directs our attention to the manner of relational living to which we are summoned as members of the family of God, a manner of living that flows from the bond of perfection that unites us. The gospel narrative paints a picture of a family that follows the directives of God.

So much has been said recently about family values. But what exactly are they? The specifics of family customs and roles played within the family may be culture-bound, but it seems that the values out of which they emerge and that inform them are not. They include mutuality, respect and service between wives and husbands, between parents and children, and between the young and the old.

Mutuality, respect and service become characteristics of the Church or the ecclesial family as well. What binds the family of God together are virtues that are as relational as are the ties that bind the members of the natural family together. It may be more challenging to live out these values within the church, for those who are called to put on Christ, bearing with one another in compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience must relate in this way with people who may be strangers.

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