

FAITH @ Home

29 DECEMBER 2024 | YEAR C: FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

Diocese of Waterford & Lismore

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Celebrating and supporting faith, hope and love in the heart of the family!

"TO THE HEIGHTS" YOUTH EDITION ALSO AVAILABLE

Sunday Mass Readings

First Reading:

Samuel 1: 20-22, 24-28

Responsorial Psalm:

Psalm 83 (84): 2-3, 5-6, 9-10

Second Reading:

1 John 3:1-2, 21-24

Gospel:

Luke 2:41-52



Carl Bloch, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

"HE THEN WENT DOWN WITH THEM AND CAME TO NAZARETH AND LIVED UNDER THEIR AUTHORITY."

Hear



Grab your Bible and look up the Gospel reading. Don't have one? No worries, you can find this week's readings online [HERE](#).

Pray



In the Gospel today we hear the familiar story of Jesus being found in the temple, the fifth Joyful Mystery.

Take some time to reflect on the key message of this week's Gospel. Think about the following:

- What is the Holy Spirit saying to you through this piece of Scripture? How do these words resonate with you personally?
- Put yourself in the shoes of Mary and Joseph in this story. What must they have felt? What conversations would they have had? Would they have worried, or trusted completely in God? How would they have felt when they found Jesus, and then when they heard his response?
- Mary pondered all these things in her heart: do you spend more time worrying over things than praying about them? Today ask the Holy Family to show you how to go to God first.

Family Prayer



HOLY FAMILY OF NAZARETH, make our family one with you. Help us to be instruments of peace. Grant that love, strengthened by grace, may prove mightier than all the weaknesses and trials through which our families sometimes pass. May we always have God at the center of our hearts and homes until we are all one family, happy and at peace in our true home with you. Amen.

Talk



On December 25th we celebrated Christmas Day, the birth of Jesus, and today already we are talking about Jesus as a twelve year old child! We have so much to learn from the Holy Family, whose feast day we celebrate today:

Discuss the following as a family:

- Did you ever get lost? How did it happen? Were you worried? Who found you? How did they feel while they were looking for you? Were they annoyed with you, maybe, for wandering off?
- Jesus' answer to Mary and Joseph might seem a little confusing, but Jesus wasn't being disrespectful. It's important to look at the next line: He went down with them...to Nazareth and lived under their authority.
- Can you think of any situations where you have to be obedient to your parents? How can you do this in a loving and humble way? Parents, how can you help your children to practice obedience too?

Family Challenge!



Make a Blessing Jar to count the blessings your family receives throughout the year! (See our attached resource!)

THE HOLY FAMILY

Today we celebrate the feast of the Holy Family. This feast is part of the Christmas season, and we should place today's Gospel in the context of what Luke's Gospel tells us about the birth of Jesus. Luke has been answering the question "Who is Jesus?" through his stories of the births of John the Baptist and Jesus. Today's Gospel reading continues this theme. It has no parallel in the other Gospels and is the conclusion of Luke's Infancy Narrative.

Mary, Joseph, and Jesus are presented in this Gospel as a faithful Jewish family. They are participating in the annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, an event shared each year with family and friends. When Jesus is found, Luke describes him as seated in the Temple in the midst of the Jewish teachers. Although he is young, Jesus seems not to need teaching about his Jewish tradition. In his dialogue with these learned teachers, Jesus astounds them with his insight and understanding. Jesus is a child of Israel. His Father is God.

The dialogue between Mary and Jesus contains many references to family relationships. In fact, in this Gospel reading Mary and Joseph are never identified by name. Instead they are referred to by their relationship to Jesus. Ultimately, this emphasizes Luke's point about the identity of Jesus. When Mary and Joseph find Jesus in the Temple, they question Jesus and express their anxiety. Jesus replies in words that many have thought to be disrespectful. Jesus says that he was never lost; he was at home. Jesus is God's Son, and he is in his Father's house. Luke will continue to suggest that faith in Jesus establishes new family relationships as he describes Jesus' public ministry.

In Luke's Gospel, Mary's importance is even greater than her role as Jesus' mother. Mary is the first disciple and will be present with Jesus' disciples after his Resurrection at Pentecost.

[Loyola Press - Sunday Connection](#)




CARLO'S CORNER

The Holy Family struggled too

Families can be tricky, can't they? Sometimes we can't wait to get home to spend time with our families, and then the little annoyances, or quirks, or responsibilities start weighing on us, and we can feel ourselves losing our patience! Family has a way of revealing things to us that we might be happier not to admit at times.

The Holy Family of Nazareth was different - that's why they're called holy. But Mary and Joseph were human too. They experienced anxiety when they lost Jesus in Jerusalem for three full days; they couldn't understand the bigger picture when mysterious things happened in their lives - but they trusted in God and His ways. They trusted in their Son and His ways.

The Holy Family didn't exactly have it easy either. Jesus was born in poverty and laid in a manger, hardly what Joseph would have liked for his family. Herod tried to slaughter Him. They spent their first years of family life as refugees in a hostile Egypt. When they finally moved back to Nazareth, they had to work hard to earn a living, with none of the modern comfortable conveniences we have, no material security, and all things pointing towards Jesus' passion and death. But they had each other, and the Christ Child was at the centre. There's a simple lesson for us all in that. Pray for your family today, whatever your relationship is like.

 Family Brings out the Worst in You (Fr Mike)

 TUNE: The Blessing (Elevation Worship)

To the Heights Youth Resource also available

Check
this
out

HOLY FAMILY MISSION

Holy Family Mission in Glencomeragh House, Kilsheelan, Co. Tipperary is a residential Catholic community for young people aged 18 – 30 who desire to learn more about their faith; live with like minded young adults; be steeped in an environment of prayer and the sacraments; have opportunities for mission with young people and families. Applications opening soon for 2025/26.

They also offer retreats for schools, Family Days and operate a retreat centre at Glencomeragh House, offering a number of retreats throughout the year, as well as live-streamed Mass each day.

See www.holyfamilymission.ie for more information.



Enjoy a beautiful Carol Service filmed
at Holy Family Mission in 2020.
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Lismore YouTube Channel.

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- To the Heights Youth Newsletter (youthministry@waterfordlismore.ie) WEEKLY
- Check it Out! Diocesan Events Bulletin (events@waterfordlismore.ie) FORTNIGHTLY



WHY NOT START A NEW NEW YEAR'S TRADITION?



Blessings Jar

If you don't have a jar, get a notebook and write your blessings in that instead!

WHAT IS A BLESSING JAR?

Blessings jars are a practical and fun way to keep a record of the things that you're thankful for on a daily basis. Whenever you recognize something that is a "blessing" in your life throughout the year, just write it on a piece of paper, fold it up, and stick it in the Blessing Jar. It might be as simple as a good chat with a friend, a hug, a gift, having the ability to play sports, having food on your table...

You can do this alone, or with your family, or even your youth group. Then decide how often you want to empty out the jar out to count your blessings: maybe on New Year's Eve, each month, on a special Feastday, or, if you're having an especially tough day, you may just want to empty out the contents of the blessings jar right then and be reminded of God how is blessing you each and every day! It will be a great reminder of God's faithfulness... in times of joy as well as in times of struggle.



HOW TO MAKE A BLESSING JAR

- Choose a large jar (or use a notebook or box if you can't source a jar)
- Stick the Blessings Label on the jar.
- Choose a scripture passage if you'd like (see next page for ideas), punch one end and tie to your jar with string.
- Decorate the jar with stickers, washi tape, ribbon, string - whatever way you like! (*Google Blessing Jars and you'll get lots of ideas!*)
- Write your first blessings idea on a small note card, fold it and put it in the jar.
- Make sure you have paper and pen near the jar to make the process easier each time you see a blessing you want to record!
- Enjoy the process and choose to be thankful every single day
- Repeat as often as you like



"MAY HIS FAVOUR BE UPON YOU AND A THOUSAND GENERATIONS,
AND YOUR FAMILY AND YOUR CHILDREN, AND THEIR CHILDREN, AND THEIR CHILDREN"  THE BLESSING - KARI JOBE

- ASCEND YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY (DIOCESE OF WATERFORD & LISMORE) -

BLESSING JAR SUGGESTIONS FOR LABELS



or create your own!

And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.
Philippians 4:19

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.
James 1:17

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.
Numbers 6:24-26

Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.
Isaiah 41:10

And from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.
John 1:16

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,
Ephesians 1:3