

FIRST READING

Those who fear the Lord honor their parents.

A reading from the book of Sirach

3:2-6

Children, the Lord expects you to honor your father,
and has given your mother authority over you.

If you honor your father,
your sins will be forgiven.

If you praise your mother,
treasure will be stored up in heaven for you.

If you honor your father,
your own children will make you happy,
and all your prayers will be answered.

If you respect your father,
you will live a long life,
and if you listen to the Lord,
your mother can relax.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

128:1-2, 3, 4-5

R. (see 1) Happy are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways.

The Lord will bless you
if you respect him
and obey his laws.
Your fields will produce,
and you will be happy
and all will go well.

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

Your wife will be as fruitful
as a grapevine,
and just as an olive tree
is rich with olives,
your home will be rich
with healthy children.

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

That is how the Lord will bless
everyone who respects him.
I pray that the Lord
will bless you from Zion
and let Jerusalem prosper
as long as you live.

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

SECOND READING

Concerning the Christian life in the world.

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Colossians

3:12-17

Brothers and sisters:

God loves you and has chosen you as his own special people.
So be gentle, kind, humble, meek, and patient.
Put up with each other,
and forgive anyone who does you wrong,
just as Christ has forgiven you.
Love is more important than anything else.
It is what ties everything completely together.

Each one of you is part of the body of Christ,
and you were chosen to live together in peace.
so let the peace that comes from Christ control your thoughts.
And be grateful.

Let the message about Christ completely fill your lives,
while you use all your wisdom to teach and instruct each other.
With thankful hearts,
sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God.
Whatever you say or do should be done in the name of the Lord Jesus,
as you give thanks to God the Father because of him.

The word of the Lord.

ALLELUIA

Colossians 3:15a, 16

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

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

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL

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

† A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23

An angel from the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream.

The angel said, "Get up!
Hurry and take the child and his mother to Egypt!
Stay there until I tell you to return,
because Herod is looking for the child and wants to kill him."

That night Joseph got up and took his wife and the child to Egypt,
where they stayed until Herod died.
So the Lord's promise came true, just as the prophet had said,
"I called my son out of Egypt."

After King Herod died,
an angel from the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph
while he was still in Egypt.
The angel said, "Get up and take the child and his mother
back to Israel.
The people who wanted to kill him are now dead."

Joseph got up and left with them for Israel.
But when he heard that Herod's son Archelaus was now ruler of Judea,
he was afraid to go there.
Then in a dream he was told to go to Galilee,
and they went to live there in the town of Nazareth.

So the Lord's promise came true,
just as the prophet had said,
"He will be called a Nazarene."

The gospel of the Lord.

THE FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

Prayer:

Dear Jesus
Please bless our family. Amen

Readings:

Sirach 3:2-6, Psalm 128: 1-2, 3, 4-5 Colossians 3:12-17

Reflection/Discussion:

1. What does it mean to you to honor someone?
2. Who are the people in your life that you honor and why do you honor them?
3. In the second reading St. Paul addresses the people as brothers and sisters, why would he call them his brothers and sisters?
4. Who do you think of as your brothers and sisters?
5. In the Gospel God spoke to St. Joseph in a dream, does God ever speak to you?
6. In what way does God speak to you?

In today's readings God shows us how to love each other in several ways. In the first reading we are told to honor and love our parents as they love and take care of us. In each person's life there are people who are special, who are the people in your life that are special to you?

Every day we meet people at school or in the stores, everywhere we go there are people. Most of them we don't even know, are these people our brothers and sisters? How should we treat them and how should we expect them to treat us?

Jesus loves everyone and asks us to also love everyone. That is not always easy because the other people do not always treat us as if they love us. What are some ways we can show love to others even if they are not easy to love?

St. Joseph was the baby Jesus' protector and when he was told that Jesus was in danger he got up and took Jesus and Mary to a safe place. This is the job of the father to protect and to teach and to love their children, to take care of them. This is what being a family is all about loving each other and taking care of the people you love.

Who is your family and how do you show them love and what can you do to help them and show them how much you care for them and be family as Jesus taught us to be? Are there other people who also take care of you and need your love, such as your grandparents and aunts or uncles? Or maybe your teacher or an elderly neighbor or family friend. We all need love, so who do we know that we can share our love with and help feel as if they were also part of our family.

Activity:

Material needed: Paper and pencil and a smile.

Make a list of the people who you are in your family and then write down ways you can show them you love them. Younger kids can draw pictures of those who are in their family.

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Write down the names of people or draw pictures of people who are not of your family who help you and also need to know you love them. (such as you teacher or priest or next door neighbor) people who have been kind to you and shown you love.

You could make each of them a card out of paper telling them how much you care for them and thank them for being a part of your life.