

Sunday, December 28, 2025
Holy Family Christmas – Cycle A

WELCOME: (COMMENTATOR)

On behalf of the Charis Community, I welcome you to our Sunday Mass. All are truly welcome, and we are excited that you are joining us whether it's your first time praying with us or if you've been with us for a while. The worship aid for Mass is on our website, and we will put the address in the chat for you should you like to pull it up to support your prayer.

We are a Eucharistic people, so we invite you to have bread and wine, in whatever form you have it, with you where you are.

The Feast of the Holy Family celebrates Jesus' family – the family in which he was born, grew and was nurtured as a human being. It is also a celebration of the family of the Risen Christ which extends to all of humanity.
Good morning!

Conversations with angels, messages in dreams, and disturbing comments from those in service to God. Joseph, a stepfather, and Mary, a teenage mother, refugees in a strange land because someone wanted to kill their child. Life was not easy, yet they did not wander from the path that God laid out before them.

Do we respond to God's requests with the faith of the Holy Family?

Let us embrace this mystery of faith as begin our prayer in song.

FIRST READING: (LECTOR #1) Sirach 3:2 - 6, 12 - 14

A reading from the book of Sirach.

God sets a father in honor over his children,
and confirms a mother's authority over her children
Those who honor their father atone for sins,
and preserve themselves from them.
When they pray, they are heard
and riches are stored up for those who revere their mothers.
Those who honor their parents are gladdened by children,
and when they pray they are heard.
Those who revere their parents will live a long life;
they who obey bring comfort to their parents.

My children, take care of your parents when they are old;
do not grieve them as long as they live.
Even if their minds fail, be considerate of them;
do not revile them in the fullness of your strength.
For kindness to parents will not be forgotten,
Firmly planted against the debt of your sins
– a house raised in justice.

The Word of God.

R. Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: (LECTOR #2) Colossians 3:12-21

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Colossians.

Brothers and sisters:

Put on, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved,
 heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience,
 bearing with one another and forgiving one another,
 if one has a grievance against another;
 as Christ has forgiven you, so must you also do.

And over all these put on love,
 that is, the bond of perfection.

And let the peace of Christ control your hearts,
 the peace into which you were also called in one body.

And be thankful.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly,
 as in all wisdom you teach and admonish one another,
 singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs
 with gratitude in your hearts to God.

And whatever you do, in word or in deed,
 do everything in the name of Christ Jesus,
 giving thanks to God, our Loving Creator, through him.

The Word of God.

R. Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23

The Lord Be with you.

And Also with you.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you O Lord.

When the magi had departed, behold,
the angel of the Most High appeared to Joseph in a dream and said,
“Rise, take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt,
and stay there until I tell you.
Herod is going to search for the child to destroy him.”
Joseph rose and took the child and his mother by night
and departed for Egypt.
He stayed there until the death of Herod,
that what the Most High had said through the prophet
might be fulfilled,
“Out of Egypt I called my child.”

When Herod had died, behold,
the angel of the Most High appeared in a dream
to Joseph in Egypt and said,
“Rise, take the child and his mother
and go to the land of Israel,
for those who sought the child's life are dead.”
He rose, took the child and his mother,
and went to the land of Israel.
But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea
in place of his father Herod,
he was afraid to go back there.
And because he had been warned in a dream,
he departed for the region of Galilee.
Joseph and Mary went and dwelt in a town called Nazareth,
so that what had been spoken through the prophets
might be fulfilled,
“He shall be called a Nazorean.”

The Gospel of Our Savior Jesus Christ.

R. Praise to you, O Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL: (COMMENTATOR)

For all leaders in our Church. For our lay leaders, for our presbyters and deacon, for our Bishop, Pablo. May our family of God on earth be in harmony with gospel joy and compassion. We pray to the Lord.

For all families in our faith community. May we support parents and our youth in their search for meaning and discernment of their gifts. May forgiveness find a home at our tables. We pray to the Lord.

For migrant families in every nation, and most especially in the United States. May we welcome the searching and those who long for stability, education and physical and emotional safety. We pray to the Lord.

For all people who imagine and create. May we rely on those who dream for a better life in our Church and world. For scientists, artists and creatives. For our next generation of talents who will show us the beauty and relevance of life, technology and good living. We pray to the Lord.

For our families who survive poverty, food insecurity, and lack of hope. May we reach out to every human family under heaven to help people thrive. May compassion be made known for all people. We pray to the Lord.

For family members recently diagnosed with illness or disease. May we ease the burdens of those who face physical pain during this Christmas season. We pray to the Lord.

For members of our families who have died. May our loved ones find eternal rest and peace in the face of Christ Jesus. We pray to the Lord.

For what else are we called to pray today? I now invite you to bring your own prayers for the World, the Church, and our needs forward. If you are off site, we invite you to unmute your microphone to begin our prayer.

Let people share.

Holy Family of Nazareth, pray for us and for all families, that we may be sources of light and justice in our communities. May we always support and uplift one another. May we share the love of Christ with everyone we meet. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Our prayer after Communion comes from the writing of Michael Marsh.

Every time I hear today's gospel, every time I read about refugees in today's news, every time I reflect on my own refugee status and my times in Egypt I cannot help but wonder "what if."

What if Egypt had closed the borders of its heart? What if the Holy Family had arrived only to find a big wall and locked doors? What if the wannabe Pharaohs had unleashed on them the dogs of fear and prejudice? What if the Egyptian people had said, "There's no room for you here?" What story would we be telling today? Would there be any good news for the refugees of the world? For you? For me? Would the spark have been extinguished?

But that didn't happen. Perhaps Egypt remembered. Perhaps Egypt remembered another time, another Joseph, another refugee people. Perhaps God sent the Holy Family to a land that would remember. Perhaps God was hoping and counting on Egypt to remember it had once been a place of refuge for his people, and it could be again. Oh, that we too might remember; that we too might remember the Holy Family, the refugees in the news, and our own flights to Egypt. Oh, that we might remember it all.

Amen.

Opening Prayer

God of blessings,
in the Holy Family you give us the model
of a household drawn together in love.
Grant that we may follow their example
and be welcomed with joy into your home in heaven.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God for ever and ever.