FAITH @Home

28 DECEMBER 2025: YEAR A: FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

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

"TO THE HEIGHTS" YOUTH EDITION ALSO AVAILABLE

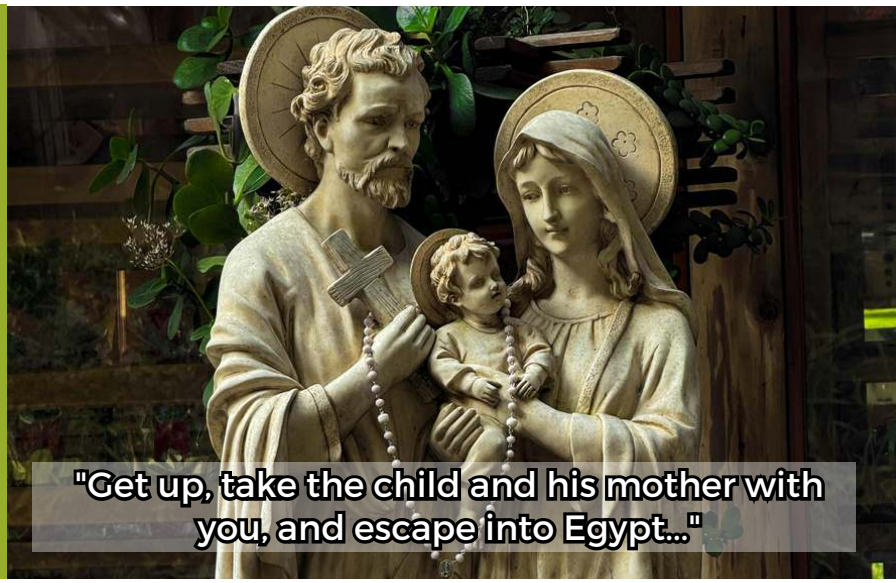
Sunday Mass Readings

First Reading:
Ecclesiasticus 3:2-6, 12-14

Responsorial Psalm:
Psalm 128:1-2,3,4-5

Second Reading:
Colossians 3:12-21

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



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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.

Reflect

- In the Gospel today we find ourselves in Bethlehem after the wise men have visited, and Joseph is warned in a dream to flee to Egypt with the Holy Family.
- What is the Holy Spirit saying to you through this piece of Scripture? How do these words resonate with you personally?
- Have you ever had to trust in God's plans for you, even though you did not know how they would turn out?
- How can you grow in trust of God's plans for your life? Ask Mary and Joseph, who showed such trusting surrender to God's will in all their actions, to help and guide you. In particular, pray for the grace of surrendering freely, rather than out of duty or fear.

Chat

In today's readings we hear about Joseph being warned by the Angel to flee to Egpyt for safety,
Discuss the following as a family:

- Have we ever faced difficulties as a family? How did we know what to do? Did we pray to God? Did we trust the family member who was leading us?
- How can we learn to trust more and more in God's plan for our lives and for our families?
- How can we deepen our love for and devotion to the Holy Family of Nazareth in our own family? Think about ways to honour the Holy Family: maybe you could display an image, or pray to them every day or even every week at a certain time?

Family Prayer

Holy Family of Nazareth, protect our family, keep us united, guide us on the path to heaven. Help us to keep Jesus at the centre of our family, and to serve each other joyfully. May all we do be done in love. Amen

Family Challenge!

Make time today (or this week) to do something together as a family: maybe you could do a jigaw puzzle, or play a board game, make a craft or bake something together - just enjoy being together intentionally as a family! Click the image or scan the QR code for more ideas!

CHRISTMAS PLAYLIST OF TUNES AND VIDEOS!

THE REALITY OF JESUS' BIRTH

Today we celebrate the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. As we do so, our Gospel invites us to consider Joseph's protection of Jesus in the face of danger. Just as in the announcement of Jesus' birth, an angel appears to Joseph in a dream. The angel warns him of Herod's plans to harm Jesus. Joseph follows the command of the angel and takes Joseph and Mary to Egypt, returning only after receiving word in another dream that it was safe to do so.

This feast is part of the Christmas season, so we should look at today's Gospel in the context of what Scripture tells us about Jesus' birth. Today's reading is found in the Gospel of Matthew, following the story of the visit of the Magi. Recall that Matthew's story about the birth of Jesus makes Joseph the primary character. Among Matthew's themes in this infancy narrative is Jesus as the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies about the messiah. Indeed, the story of the Holy Family's flight to Egypt recalls the story of Moses in the Book of Exodus.

It should also be noted that today's reading omits the verses that recount Herod's order of the massacre of the infant boys in and around Bethlehem. We mark this event on the Feast of the Holy Innocents on December 28.

These events remind us of the difficult reality of Jesus' birth. While the story of the Magi's visit will be recalled in our liturgy on the Feast of the Epiphany, our Christmas celebration is made more sober by the recollection that not everyone received Christ's birth with joy or obedience. Herod's jealousy and malice contrast with Joseph's obedience to the words of the angel. The Holy Family's escape to Egypt and the massacre that Jesus is saved from remind us of the struggles and sacrifices that are required as preparation for God's salvation.

from ***Loyola Press Sunday Connection***

A SPOKEN WORD POEM ABOUT WHY WE REALLY CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS

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 Schmitz)

The Blessing (Elevation Worship)

To the Heights Youth Resource also available

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- Faith@Home / Let's Dive In (faithathome@waterfordlismore.ie)
- To the Heights (youthministry@waterfordlismore.ie)
- Check it Out! Diocesan Events Bulletin (events@waterfordlismore.ie)

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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 or prayer 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

BLESSING JAR SUGGESTIONS FOR LABELS

Blessings

BLESSINGS

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