

29th December 2019

Sunday within the Octave of Christmas

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Readings:

First: Sirach 3.2-6, 12-14, "Whoever respects their mother is like one who lays up treasure." (4)

Psalm: 128, "Blessed is everyone who fears the Lord." (1)

Second: Colossians 3.12-21, "Let peace of Christ rule in your hearts." (15a)

Gospel: Matthew 2.13-15, 19-23, "Take up the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt." (13b)

Parenting

Parenting instinct and the secrets of parenting grew in Mary and Joseph with the birth of Jesus and its aftermath. It is questionable whether Joseph and Mary were parenting Jesus or Jesus was parenting them in their vocation to bring up the Son of God on earth. Parenting is a growth process; so is family. It has to be a growing organism learning every day from all involved or actively living in the family.

Family life is not something given once and for all. It is something worked out and made to happen every day in life of every member in the family. We may have dreams about a family life. Dreams are dreams, and they may not be the evolving reality and life experiences. The holy family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph was one in which not a single member knew what would be the shape of their tomorrows. Orders from God, or instinctive feelings, or inspirations, or what we call directives of the Holy Spirit were coming to them day by day and they had to make far too many spot decisions and adjustments to live their daily life.

We find in the Holy Family and its life all the ingredients in the life of every average family, plus many more additions and deductions. Not a day was easy for Mary and Joseph as we the ordinary humans figure out in the daily lives of our families and relationships. Except the cry and mumblings of baby Jesus there might have been much silence in that family. This is just the opposite of happening in our average families. However, the silence of Joseph and Mary might have been more eloquent, enriching and mutually supporting and building up each other. This is the lesson our families need to learn.

As is evident from the very little scripture references we have about the holy family life must have been hard for them. In our way of thinking God was very hard on them and on his Son. These hardships and their acceptance gave them extraordinary joy and peace. We must ponder, reflect and meditate and learn lessons from the life the Holy Family of Joseph, Mary and Jesus.