

Reflecting On Sunday's Readings

THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH —December 29, 2019

First Reading — Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14

² For the Lord honored the father above the children, and he confirmed the right of the mother over her sons. ³ Whoever honors his father atones for sins, ⁴ and whoever glorifies his mother is like one who lays up treasure. ⁵ Whoever honors his father will be gladdened by his own children, and when he prays he will be heard. ⁶ Whoever glorifies his father will have long life, and whoever obeys the Lord will refresh his mother; ... ¹² O son, help your father in his old age, and do not grieve him as long as he lives; ¹³ even if he is lacking in understanding, show forbearance; in all your strength do not despise him. ¹⁴ For kindness to a father will not be forgotten, and against your sins it will be credited to you.

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

R. (cf. 1) **Blessed are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways.**

Blessed is everyone who fears the LORD,
who walks in his ways!
For you shall eat the fruit of your handiwork;
blessed shall you be, and favored.

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

Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine
in the recesses of your home;
your children like olive plants
around your table.

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

Behold, thus is the man blessed
who fears the LORD.
The LORD bless you from Zion:
may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem
all the days of your life.

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

Second Reading — Colossians 3:12-21

¹² Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, and patience, ¹³ forbearing one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴ And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. ¹⁸ Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. ¹⁹ Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them. ²⁰ Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. ²¹ Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.

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

¹³ Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." ¹⁴ And he rose and took the child and his mother by night, and departed to Egypt, ¹⁵ and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt have I called my son." ... ¹⁹ But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream

Our Lady of Perpetual Help

to Joseph in Egypt, saying, ²⁰ “Rise, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child’s life are dead.” ²¹ And he rose and took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. ²² But when he heard that Archelaus reigned over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. ²³ And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, “He shall be called a Nazarene.”

Our Lady of Perpetual Help

INVITATION TO PRAY

Pause for a few moments of silence and enter more deeply into the presence of God...

Proclaim the Scriptures out loud

As you listen to the scriptures be attentive to a word, a phrase, a question, an image, or a feeling that emerges. Reflect on this quietly or share it aloud.

INVITATION TO REFLECT

INVITATION TO GROUP SHARING

First Reading — Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14

1. What are the Lord's intentions in encouraging healthy family love?"

Second Reading — Colossians 3:12-21

2. What phrase or concept from this passage in Colossians, if applied, would best help you fulfill your vocation as a holy family?

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

3. What can we learn about family leadership from Joseph?
4. In what ways do followers of Jesus now face threats from the world?
5. Though most of us don't have angels speaking to us in our dreams, where can we discern God's direction for the care of our family?

INVITATION TO ACT

Determine a specific action (individual or group) that flows from your sharing. When choosing an individual action, determine what you will do and share it with the group. When choosing a group action, determine who will take responsibility for different aspects of the action. These should be your primary considerations.

CLOSING INVITATION TO PRAY

Give thanks to God (aloud or silently) for new insights, for desires awakened, for directions clarified, for the gift of one another's openness and sensitivity. Conclude with a final prayer.