

December 27, 2020

Holy Family of Jesus Mary and Joseph

God's will be done

“Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in sight of all the peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel.” – Luke 2: 29-32

You may remember in your childhood the anticipation for Christmas morning. You had waited for months, seen the Christmas specials on TV and the presents and decorations everywhere. You probably thought, “Christmas can’t get here fast enough.” You knew it was going to happen and probably counted the days on your Advent calendar. Finally, the day arrived, and it was time to celebrate!

As we celebrate the feast of the Holy Family this Sunday, we read about Joseph and Mary presenting Jesus in the temple at prescribed times according to the Jewish law. Simeon and Anna were at the temple, keeping prayerful vigil for the, “consolation of Israel,” as Luke writes. Simeon was a prayerful man, living his entire life waiting and anticipating the day he would see the Lord. The Gospel tells us that the Holy Spirit told Simeon that he would not die until he saw the redeemer.

On this day, he finally meets Jesus. Instead of running into the streets for a parade or creating a celebratory event, he offers a quiet prayer of thanksgiving to God. Meanwhile, Anna, a prayerful woman, who spent day and night praying and fasting in the temple, also gave thanks to God. Some might say she was one of the first women to proclaim the Good News as scripture says, “She gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were awaiting the redemption of Jerusalem.”

Some things take a lifetime of work and perseverance to achieve. Yet, many times we demand instant gratification. We expect God to answer our prayers in our time. But God works on a different time schedule. Simeon waited his entire life to see God. God fulfilled his promise to Simeon. He must have prayed a thousand prayers, hoped a thousand hopes, and suffered many disappointments. Finally, his dream was realized, and God rewarded his patience.

What are waiting or hoping for? Offer a prayer to God today of gratitude for the gifts of this life – for those already received and those to come. Ask for a patient spirit that God’s will be done, not our own, and in God’s time and not ours.

- Bishop Gregory Parkes