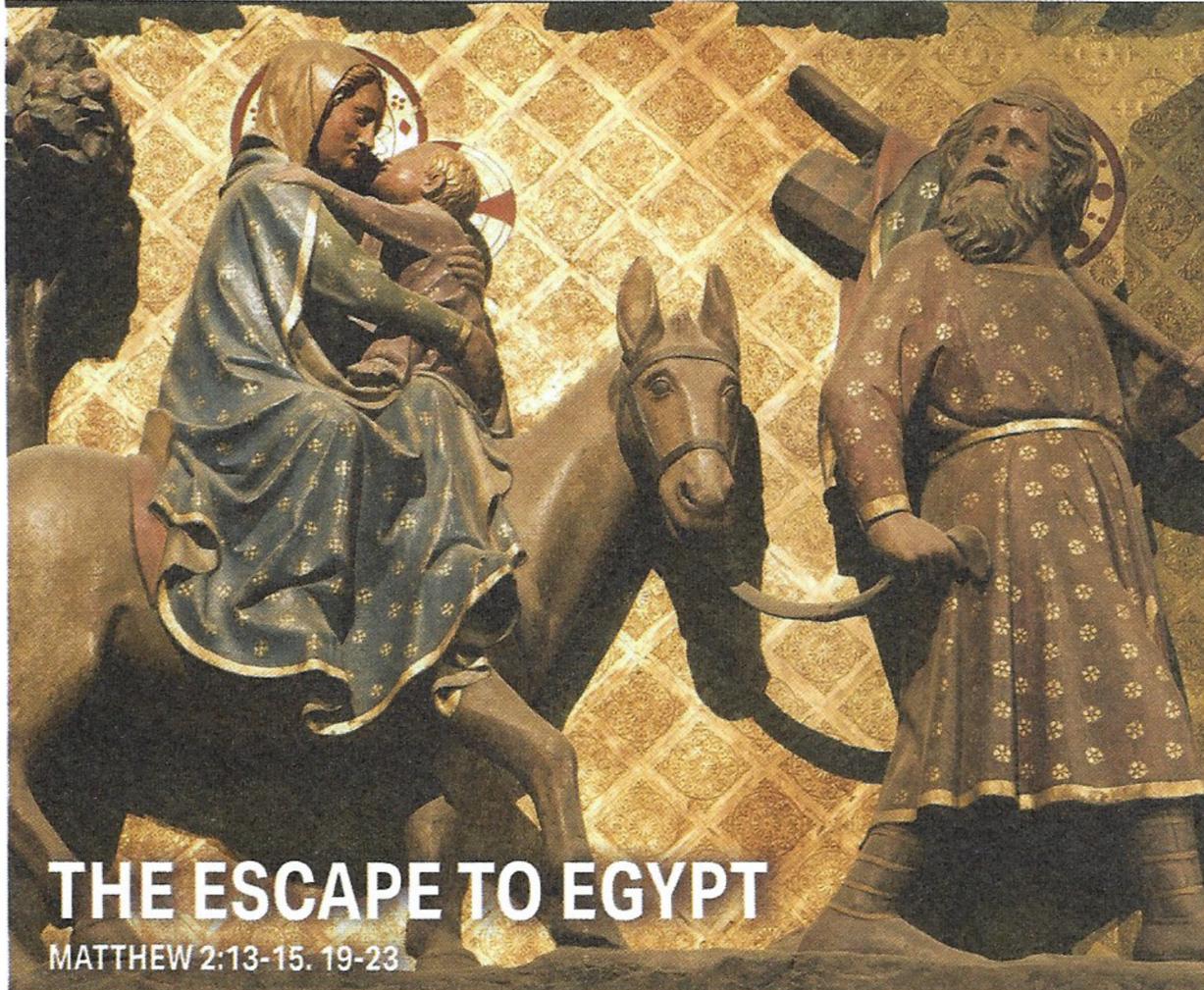


Sunday Message

THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY, JOSEPH

THE WORD

Year A • 28 December 2025 • Psalter Week 1



REFLECT

Today, on the Feast of the Holy Family, we reflect on the journey of Mary, Joseph, and Jesus – a family like no other, yet one who faced real struggles, fears, and uncertainties. In the Gospel, Joseph receives an urgent call from God to flee into Egypt to protect the child Jesus. Without hesitation, he rises and acts to keep his family safe.

This reminds us that faith is not always easy or comfortable. Sometimes, like Joseph, we are asked to trust and move forward into the unknown, even when we feel afraid. But the Holy Family shows us that in those moments, God's love and protection are with us, guiding each step.

Their journey was difficult – leaving home, stepping into unfamiliar lands – but it was through their courage and trust that God's plan was fulfilled. As we celebrate this feast, we remember that every family, in its joys and challenges, can find strength in God's presence.

So today, let us hold up the Holy Family as a model. Whether our families are perfect or struggling, may we follow Joseph's example – responding with faith, love, and courage. And may God's gentle care be with all our families, guiding us through every challenge and blessing us with hope. ■

In today's Gospel, we witness the Holy Family's urgent flight into Egypt, escaping King Herod's deadly plan. Joseph's obedience to the angel's warning saves Jesus' life, highlighting God's protective care even amid danger.

This passage reminds us that faith often calls us to trust and act quickly, even when the future is uncertain. Joseph doesn't hesitate; he rises in the night to protect his family. Like him, we are invited to respond promptly to God's call, especially when it challenges our comfort or safety.

Herod's cruelty contrasts sharply with the gentle care of Mary and Joseph. Their journey into exile mirrors the struggles many endure – displacement, fear, and uncertainty. Yet, God's providence is clear: Jesus, the promised Messiah, is preserved to bring salvation.

The return from Egypt also fulfills ancient prophecy, reminding us that God's plan is unfolding, even through hardship.

As we reflect on this passage, let us ask ourselves: Are we ready to trust God's guidance in difficult moments? Can we, like Joseph and Mary, find courage and hope in uncertain times?

May this story encourage us to place our trust in God's loving protection, knowing that no matter what dangers surround us, God's plan for our life will never fail. ■

SAY

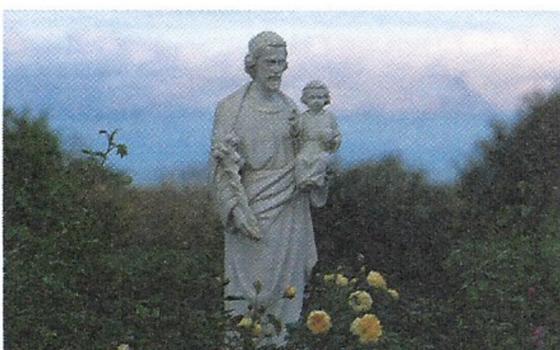
**Loving God,
on this Feast of the Holy Family,
we thank you for the gift of family –
a place of love, strength, and faith.
Help us to follow Joseph's example
of trust and courage,
and Mary's example of gentle faith.
Be with all families, especially those
facing hardship or fear.
May your love guide us, protect us,
and unite us in peace.
Amen.**

DO

Create a "Prayer Card" or "Prayer Tree" in the church where families can write down prayer intentions for their loved ones. Encourage parishioners to commit to praying for these families throughout the week, fostering a spirit of community care and support inspired by the Holy Family.

LEARN

St. Joseph, called the guardian of Jesus and the Church, teaches us the power of quiet faith and obedience. His prompt trust in God's call saved the Holy Family. The Church invites all families to follow this example – embracing challenges with patience and faith, trusting God's loving plan.



ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*The shepherds went in haste,
and found Mary and Joseph and the Infant lying in a manger.*

COLLECT

O God, who were pleased to give us the shining example of the Holy Family, graciously grant that we may imitate them in practising the virtues of family life and in the bonds of charity, and so, in the joy of your house, delight one day in eternal rewards. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

FIRST READING Sirach 3:2-6. 12-14

A reading from the Book of Sirach.

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

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 128(127):1-2. 3. 4-5. R. cf. 1

R: Blessed are all who fear the LORD, and walk in his ways.

1. Blessed are all who fear the LORD,
and walk in his ways!
By the labour of your hands you shall eat.
You will be blessed and prosper. **R.**
2. Your wife like a fruitful vine
in the heart of your house;
your children like shoots of the olive
around your table. **R.**
3. Indeed thus shall be blessed
the husband who fears the LORD.
May the LORD bless you from Sion.
May you see Jerusalem prosper
all the days of your life! **R.**

SECOND READING Colossians 3:12-21

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

(for shorter form read between > <)

> Brothers and sisters: Put on, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were

called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. 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. <

Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them. Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL Colossians 3:15a. 16a

R: Alleluia, Alleluia.

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts;

let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.

R: Alleluia.

GOSPEL Matthew 2:13-15. 19-23

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

When the Magi 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 until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.' And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: 'Out of Egypt I called my son.'

But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, 'Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead.' And he rose and took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning 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. And he went and lived in a city called Nazareth, so that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, that he would be called a Nazarene.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

We offer you, Lord, the sacrifice of conciliation, humbly asking that,

through the intercession of the Virgin Mother of God and Saint Joseph,

you may establish our families firmly in your grace and your peace.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Our God has appeared on the earth, and lived among us.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Bring those you refresh with this heavenly Sacrament, most merciful Father,

to imitate constantly the example of the Holy Family, so that, after the trials of this world,

we may share their company for ever.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.