

WE ARE GOD’S HOLY FAMILY

The scriptures of Israel are filled with many stories of barren couples who were miraculously granted the gift of children by God. Surely the best known among these is the first reading from today, from which Luke took inspiration when he recounted the miraculous birth of John the Baptist to Zechariah and Elizabeth, and the more miraculous birth of Jesus to Mary and Joseph. In each instance, we are given examples or role models of those who trusted in God. More than examples of those who trust, they are models of self-surrender. They abandoned their own presuppositions and prejudices about the workings of the world and turned their lives over to belief in a God who can make life grow where none ought to; a God who can turn death around into a new and unimagined life; a God who can, today, take a tiny child of humble parents in an insignificant town and make him into a light for all the world. This is what we, as God’s holy family, are called to do each day: to trust not in ourselves and the way we think things should be, but to open ourselves and surrender ourselves in faith to a God of endless promise.

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TODAY’S READINGS

First Reading — Those who honor their parents will be greatly blessed and will atone for sins (Sirach 3:2-6,12-14) *or* *Genesis 15:1-6; 21:1-3.*

Psalms — Blessed are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways (Psalm 128) *or Psalm 105.*

Second Reading — Be thankful; do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus (Colossians 3:12-21 [12-17]) *or Hebrews 11:8, 11-12, 17-19.*

Gospel — The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom (Luke 2:22-40 [22, 39-40]).

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READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday: 1 Jn 1:5 — 2:2; Ps 124:2-5, 7b-8; Mt:13-18

Tuesday: 1 Jn 2:3-11; Ps 96:1-3, 5b-6; Lk 2:22-35

Wednesday: 1 Jn 2:12-17; Ps 96:7-10; Lk 2:36-40

Thursday: 1 Jn 2:18-21; Ps 96:1-2, 11-13; Jn 1:1-18

Friday: Nm 6:22-27; Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8; Gal 4:4-7; Lk 2:16-21

Saturday: 1 Jn 2:22-28; Ps 98:1-4; Jn 1:19-28

Sunday: Is 60:1-6; Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-13; Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6; Mt 2:1-12

SAINTS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

Sunday: The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

Monday: The Holy Innocents

Tuesday: Fifth Day within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord; St. Thomas Becket

Wednesday: Sixth Day within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord

Thursday: Seventh Day within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord; St. Sylvester I; New Year’s Eve

Friday: The Octave of the Nativity of the Lord; Mary, the Holy Mother of God; World Day of Prayer for Peace; New Year’s Day; First Friday

Saturday: Ss. Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen; First Saturday

FEAST OF FAITH

Processions

Why does the liturgy begin with a procession? It is not just a practical matter of getting the ministers of the liturgy from the sacristy to the sanctuary. The procession is a powerful sign of who we are as Christian people. We are not static, staying in one place. We are going somewhere. Our procession leads us to the altar, sign of Christ’s presence in our midst. We move, we process, because we recognize our need for what Christ is preparing for us at that table. We go forward eagerly, because we are hungry for that heavenly food.

This procession is an orderly one: servers, deacon, priest presider. Each is set apart by distinctive vesture: albs for the altar servers, dalmatic for the deacon, chasuble for the priest. The procession is an image of the hierarchical structure of the Church. On a deeper level it is an image of unity in diversity. We are all on a journey to the heavenly city, but each of us is clothed with different gifts. We all receive the call to service, but not in the same way. Only by coming together in all our wonderful variety can we achieve the work of the kingdom.

—Corinna Laughlin, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

CHILDREN OF ETERNITY

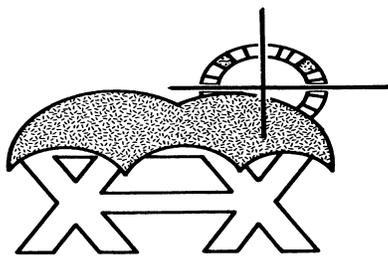
You are children of eternity. Your immortal crown awaits you, to reward your duty and love. You may indeed sow here in tears, but you may be sure there to reap in joy.

—St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

TIME

Do not squander time, for that is the stuff life is made of.

—Benjamin Franklin



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**The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph
December 27, 2020**

My eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared
in the sight of all the peoples.

— Luke 2:30-31