

Homily Helps and Petitions for the Feast of the Holy Family, Cycle A (December 28, 2025)

Homily Helps

† Scripture Passages to Note:

Sirach 3: Whoever honors his father atones for his sins

Psalms 128: You will be blessed and prosper

Colossians 3: Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly

Matthew 2: Remain there until I tell you

† Comments for the Day:

The Feast of the Holy Family invites us to look not only at Jesus, Mary, and Joseph as a model for family life, but also to encounter the ways God is present in the ordinary and sometimes difficult realities of our own households. Each of today's readings offers a different window into how God sanctifies family life.

Sirach reminds us that honoring father and mother is not merely a rule but a pathway to blessing. It highlights practical, tender responsibilities: caring for aging parents, showing patience when their minds may falter, and remembering the sacrifices they made. This reading speaks profoundly to today's realities: caring for elders, navigating generational differences, repairing family wounds, offering forgiveness where there has been hurt. The message is simple but demanding- love must become concrete especially toward those closest to us.

Psalms 128 is a vision of the peace God desires for every household: fruitful labor, flourishing family life, and the deep joy that comes from walking in the fear (that is, reverence) of the Lord. This psalm offers a reminder that the foundation of every holy family whether big or small, traditional or nontraditional is faithfulness. Families flourish not because they are perfect, but because they root themselves in God.

St. Paul gives us the "wardrobe" of a holy family: compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, forgiveness, and above all, love. These virtues do not grow automatically; they must be practiced daily. Paul also challenges each role within family life to be lived with mutual respect and self-giving not dominance, but reciprocal love, rooted in Christ. This reading reminds us that the home is a school of discipleship. It is where we learn mercy, where we practice forgiveness, where we become capable of loving the wider world.

This resource is provided by Catholic Climate Covenant in collaboration with the Integral Faith Team,
a group of male and female religious, priests, and lay people dedicated to serving the Church.

The Gospel of Matthew shows the Holy Family in motion: fleeing, returning, relocating. Joseph receives God's guidance through dreams, and each time he obeys without hesitation even when the path is uncertain. This reveals something essential: holiness in family life often emerges not in perfect stability, but in faithful responsiveness to God amid disruption. Many of our families know the experience of sudden change job loss, illness, grief, relocation, conflict. The Holy Family shows us that God accompanies us in every transition, and that trust in God's voice however it reaches us helps us navigate life's storms. Family life is best lived on a healthy planet where the benefits and burdens of earth are equally shared. Recognizing our responsibility to this common home of ours is an imperative. Parents have a responsibility to teach their children to care for the earth because the family is truly the domestic church where lasting values are imbued.

† **Passages from *Laudato Si'* to Note:**

God's love is the fundamental moving force in all created things...Every creature is thus the object of the Father's tenderness, who gives it its place in the world. Even the fleeting life of the least of beings is the object of his love, and in its few seconds of existence, God enfolds it with his affection. (77)

In the Christian understanding of the world, the destiny of all creation is bound up with the mystery of Christ, present from the beginning: "All things have been created through him and for him" (*Col* 1:16). (99)

We take [ecosystems] into account not only to determine how best to use them, but also because they have an intrinsic value independent of their usefulness. Each organism, as a creature of God, is good and admirable in itself; the same is true of the harmonious ensemble of organisms existing in a defined space and functioning as a system. Although we are often not aware of it, we depend on these larger systems for our own existence. (140)

Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: That we might be open to new ways of understanding the implications of our responsibility to care for the earth, let us pray to the Lord ...

Option 2: That we will come to see that earth and all its fullness as part of our extended family, let us pray to the Lord ...

Further Resources

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