

Holy Family Sunday-2025 “Jesus be at the Center of your Family”

When the son of God wanted to be born on earth, he needed a family: JMJ- and chose Holy Family -to remind us of the centrality of family, the gift of love and the beauty of vocation to family life.

We know that life is a blessing. If so, family is a double blessing. We all were blessed to be born into a family. There are three basic human psychological needs: to be accepted; related; loved. We were loved, because we are into a family.

Family is one of the greatest value God has given us. You can choose your friends, and your life partner! But, *you can never choose your family*. You do not choose your parents, your brothers and sisters. It's all given to you; it's God's gift to you. Friends will come and go; family stays back with you always! The only thing that stays back, even when you might be rejected by everyone.

Why we call 'Family', a “*domestic church*” (JPPII/FC)? It is there, where we learn faith, grow in faith and share faith. Parents are the first and foremost educators of their children. We live in a world where values of human family as established by God, is under threat and challenges. In the midst of a broken world, darkened by selfishness and individualism, *the family is destined to be a school of love*, of compassion & forgiveness; mutual respect, patience and humility.

Our society today emphasizes individual satisfaction and subjective fulfillment. It easily loses touch with some fundamental measures of dignified, other-oriented culture and relationships. My home experience: I am the 7th of a small family of 11 children.

Friends, we know how hard it is sometimes to cope with the defect of the other! We should always remember that there is no perfect family on earth, no perfect husband, no perfect wife. There can be differences of opinions, disagreements and conflicts. But, the more you learn to say “*I am sorry*”, to forgive and forget, the better to get ahead together as a family. This is what God wants from you. See the example of Holy Family!

When we look into the Holy Family, we realize that they were faced with many challenges from its very inception. Even before the marriage of Mary and Joseph. Having all the law in his favor to disown Mary, when found with a child, Joseph decides, “not to disgrace her in public”. Joseph’s justice goes beyond the borders of social justice! Mary, when things went beyond her understanding/or why have you done this to us? Mary keeps everything in her heart, and accepts everything as God’s holy will.

Finally, Luke tells us: Jesus grew up, in wisdom and in *obedience* to his parents!

-Children, listen to your parents; love them and respect them!

-Parents, find time for your children; they are your greatest blessing!

The family that prays together, stays together. Jesus was at the center of Holy Family. As far as Jesus is the center of your family, everything will go well. Let Jesus be at the center of your heart, and at the heart of your family as well. Amen!

Jesus, just like a professional psychologist, goes about explaining how to handle anger, marital relationship, matters concerning divorce and swearing. The teaching of Jesus is relevant today more than ever. Most of us are like the Pharisees and scribes who follow the letter of the Law but not the Spirit of the Law. Let's try to accept joyfully his teaching, what is possible, feasible and correct and live it in our day-to-day life.

1. Unconditional acceptance: no condition, even when you are less good
2. Empathetic Understanding/feeling with
3. Being Non-judgmental/ I don't judge you
4. Kenotic Love/ love is giving, always even up to when it hurts

What does it mean to be a righteous person?

-People of Israel, social life, human relationships etc. regulated by Mosaic Law/ Pharisees strictly followed, as well as forced others to observe it.

- Jesus – placing “Human person” at the core of the law, and showed compassion and kindness, interpreted to be “abolishing law”

“I did not come to abolish the law, but to “FULFILL IT”/ what does it mean..

Jesus: wanted to purify it, renew it, re-interpret it with new meaning: going deeper and beyond.

- For a Christian, his righteousness should exceed that of non-Christians
- Eg. You can never make an offering of sacrifice, pleasing to God, if you are not reconciled with your offender. / **Forgiveness**
- Ill-treating others, speaking bad of others and spreading gossip about others are equal to Murder. How imp. To learn to live in peace with our brothers and sisters

- Adultery: Looking someone with **lust** is Adultry / the sanctity-dignity of human body.

In order to see the “inner meaning of the law, you need **“the gift understanding”**”

Ps. 119- “Lord, give me understanding, that I may observe your Law and walk in your way.”