



USCCaruso
Catholic Center

The Feast of the Holy Family

Family Prayer Service

Presider: In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit

Let us acknowledge the times which we have not been faithful to God.

Penitential Rite A

All: I confess to almighty God
and to you, my brothers and sisters,
that I have greatly sinned,
in my thoughts and in my words,
in what I have done and in what I have failed to do,
(striking your breast, say:)
through my fault, through my fault,
through my most grievous fault;
(Then continue with:)
therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin,
all the Angels and Saints,
and you, my brothers and sisters,
to pray for me to the Lord our God.

Opening Prayer:

Presider:

O God, who were pleased to give us the shining example of the Holy Family, graciously grant that we may imitate them in practicing 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.

All: Amen

A Reading from the Book of Genesis:

Genesis 15:1-6; 21:1-3

The word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying: "Fear not, Abram! I am your shield; I will make your reward very great." But Abram said, "O Lord GOD, what good will your gifts be, if I keep on being childless and have as my heir the steward of my house, Eliezer?" Abram continued, "See, you have given me no offspring, and so one of my servants will be my heir." Then the word of the LORD came to him: "No, that one shall not be your heir; your own issue shall be your heir." The Lord took Abram outside and said, "Look up at the sky and count the stars, if you can. Just so," he added, "shall your descendants be." Abram put his faith in the LORD, who credited it to him as an act of righteousness.

The LORD took note of Sarah as he had said he would; he did for her as he had promised. Sarah became pregnant and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time that God had stated. Abraham gave the name Isaac to this son of his whom Sarah bore him.

The Word of the Lord

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 105:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9 (7a, 8a)

R. The Lord remembers his covenant forever.

Give thanks to the LORD, invoke his name; make known among the nations his deeds. Sing to him, sing his praise, proclaim all his wondrous deeds.

R. The Lord remembers his covenant forever.

Glory in his holy name; rejoice, O hearts that seek the LORD! Look to the LORD in his strength; constantly seek his face.

R. The Lord remembers his covenant forever.

You descendants of Abraham, his servants, sons of Jacob, his chosen ones! He, the LORD, is our God; throughout the earth his judgments prevail.

R. The Lord remembers his covenant forever.

He remembers forever his covenant which he made binding for a thousand generations which he entered into with Abraham and by his oath to Isaac.

R. The Lord remembers his covenant forever.

A Reading from the Letter to the Hebrews:

Hebrews 11:8, 11-12, 17-19

Brothers and sisters:

By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; he went out, not knowing where he was to go. By faith he received power to generate, even though he was past the normal age—and Sarah herself was sterile—for he thought that the one who had made the promise was trustworthy. So it was that there came forth from one man, himself as good as dead, descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sands on the seashore.

By faith Abraham, when put to the test, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was ready to offer his only son, of whom it was said, “Through Isaac descendants shall bear your name.” He reasoned that God was able to raise even from the dead, and he received Isaac back as a symbol.

The Word of the Lord

Alleluia

Hebrews 1:1-2

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets; in these last days, he has spoken to us through the Son.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

A Reading from the Holy Gospel According to Luke:

Longer Form Luke 2:22-40

When the days were completed for their purification according to the law of Moses, they took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, just as it is written in the law of the Lord, *Every male that opens the womb shall be consecrated to the Lord*, and to offer the sacrifice of a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons, in accordance with the dictate in the law of the Lord.

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. This man was righteous and devout, awaiting the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Christ of the Lord. He came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to perform the custom of the law in regard to him, he took him into his arms and blessed God, saying: "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." The child's father and mother were amazed at what was said about him; and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be contradicted—and you yourself a sword will pierce—so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived seven years with her husband after her marriage, and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple, but worshiped night and day with fasting and prayer. And coming forward at that very time, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were awaiting the redemption of Jerusalem.

When they had fulfilled all the prescriptions of the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

The Gospel of the Lord

Reflection/Family Discussion on the readings and Gospel:
by Fr. Joe Kim, OFM Conv.

Today we celebrate the Feast of the Holy Family! Have you ever wondered what makes the family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph so holy, so highly regarded that we set aside the Sunday after Christmas to celebrate this family unit? I suppose many simply assume that what makes the Holy Family so holy is because it is comprised of extraordinary members: Jesus - the Son of God, Mary - immaculately conceived without sin and chosen by God the Father to be mother to the Christ, and Joseph - a righteous man entrusted with caring and protecting his family in his vocation of being the human father to Jesus, and husband of Mary. How Holy! How extraordinary! So yes, we honor and celebrate them in this way! But we are also invited to discover, or rediscover what is also true of the Holy Family and what is true for all our families. What makes this family holy, is what makes our families holy – that we enter into true relationship with each other.

To choose to love, to choose to care. To choose to forgive, to choose to ask for forgiveness. To choose to always try - not because it is easy or when we want to, but precisely because it is hard, especially when we are hurt or in crisis. We tend to sterilize the relationship of Jesus, Mary, Joseph. Since they are extraordinary in who they are and what God called them to, that somehow it must have come easy. Think about all the stories that we have about the Holy Family in scripture - we hear of Jesus getting lost in the temple without the parents realizing this for three days; during Christmas we hear of Jesus born in a manger where animals are kept, and being rejected by all in the town of Bethlehem; we hear of Joseph fleeing with his family to Egypt to escape Herod. Think about that - the difficult trip to Egypt, not knowing the language, culture, etc. How would you and your family have fared in these difficult, uncertain moments in life? How do you fare in similar moments in your life today? Holiness in the family is not perfection; Rather, it is enduring with each other, supporting each other, and if or when things start to fall apart and we disagree or hurt each other, we forgive and reconcile with one another.

It is no accident that the Church has always recognized the family as the first Church - the domestic church. It is with each other that we come to learn our faith. We learn to love and be loved! We learn to forgive and be forgiven! We learn what it means to be family and what it means to be in true relationship! It does not matter what your family relationships may be like at present. It may be good. It may not be so good. But this Feast reminds us that our families are God's gifts and blessings to us. We can always begin again; we can always enter more deeply into relationships. If your family relationships seem broken beyond repair, we look to the Paschal Mystery. Our Messiah, our Savior, our Lord Jesus takes the ugliness of the cross, and through it, transforms it to the beauty of new life, the resurrection! Let us pray today, that God will grant us the grace to begin again and to enter anew into our family relationships. May Jesus grant new beginnings, new life, more love, and more holiness!

What are your family relationships (families of “blood” or “love”) like at present? Who are you close to? Who has drifted away?

Have you shown gratitude and appreciation for who these people are in your life? Have you allowed others to do so? Who do you need to forgive? For what do you need to ask for forgiveness?

In what ways will you invite your family to help each other to know God's love and grow in holiness?

Nicene Creed:

ALL: I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven,

(bow)

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

(raise from bow)

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins, and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.

Amen

Presider: Let us now join our hearts and voices in prayer to our Father in heaven for the needs of every member of our human family.

Intercessions:

1. For our Church and our parish community, that's Christ's peace and a dedication to thankfulness may reign in our life together:
(Pause for silent prayer).
All: Lord, hear us.

2. For parents, guardians, and teachers, that they may always realize the preciousness of the young lives in their care:
(Pause for silent prayer).
All: Lord, hear us.

3. For children and young people, that they may learn and grow in wisdom and grace within the joy of a loving family:
(Pause for silent prayer).
All: Lord, hear us.

4. For children who are lost and abandoned and for children who have been abducted, that, through God's loving providence, they will return to their homes quickly and safely:
(Pause for silent prayer).
All: Lord, hear us.

5. For families in crisis, for families in mourning, for families estranged and separated, that Christ may be present to them in the loving support of neighbors and friends:
(Pause for silent prayer).
All: Lord, hear us.

6. For all our family members and friends who have died, that they may live in the presence of God forever:
(Pause for silent prayer).
All: Lord, hear us.

Presider:

Hear the prayers of your family gathered around your table, O Lord. As Jesus taught us to call you "Father," may we learn to respect and love one another as brothers and sisters. We offer these prayers in the name of your Son, Jesus, the Christ.

Our Father:

Presider: At the Savior's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

All:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

Amen

Sign of Peace:

Presider: Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your Apostles: Peace I leave you, my peace I give you; look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church, and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your will. Who live and reign for ever and ever.

All: Amen

Presider:

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

All:

And with your spirit.

Presider:

Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

(At this time please offer a moment of silence before the Spiritual Communion is said.)

Spiritual Communion:

All: I wish my Lord, to receive you with the purity, humility and devotion with which your most holy Mother received you, with the spirit and fervor of the saints.

Closing Prayer:

Presider:

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.

All: Amen