



Feast Of The Holy Family

Introduction

Through Christ God has made of us one family and he has bound himself even more closely to us by a bond that can never be broken. Today we celebrate the feast of the Holy Family. We think of our own families, which are coming under increasing pressure. We think too of the human family, scarred by so many divisions. We ask God to heal the wounds of sin and division.

First Reading (Ecclesiasticus 3:2-6, 12-14)

This reading could be seen as a brief commentary on the commandment to honour one's father and mother. This entails not only obeying them when we are young, but caring for them when they get old.

Second Reading (Colossians 3:12-21)

This stresses the atmosphere of love that should reign in a Christian family. It places special emphasis on mutual forgiveness.

Gospel (Luke 2:22-40)

This relates the presentation of the child Jesus in the temple, and also provides us with a brief glimpse of his life at Nazareth.

Prayer Of The Faithful

Let us pray to God our Father for the family, which is still one of the best and most important institutions in the world.

R: Lord, hear our prayer.

For all humankind: that the different races, realizing that they form one family under God, may seek the way of peace together. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, hear our prayer.

For our civil leaders and legislators: that they may protect the family as the most important unit in our society. Let us pray to the Lord.



R: Lord, hear our prayer.

For broken families and families in hardship: that they may find support. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, hear our prayer.

For all parents: that they may love their children warmly, yet without possessiveness. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, hear our prayer.

Communion Reflection

Looking at authority from the child's viewpoint

Don't spoil me,
I know I ought not to have all I ask for.
I'm only testing you.

Don't be afraid to be firm with me.
It makes me feel more secure.
Don't correct me in front of others,
I'll take more notice
if you correct me in private.
Don't nag, or I shall have to protect myself
by appearing deaf.
Don't make rash promises,
I feel badly let down when promises are broken.
Don't be inconsistent,
That completely confuses me.
Don't put me off when I ask questions.
Or I will be forced to seek my information elsewhere.

Don't think it beneath your dignity
to apologize if you're wrong. An honest apology
makes me feel surprisingly warm towards you.

But two things I need above all others –
understanding and love.
If you give me these,
the rest will take care of themselves.