

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph - Homily – 12/28/25

“God sets a father in honor over his children; a mother’s authority he confirms over her sons.”

All the readings today including the gospel express the primacy of the family and particularly the father and mother in God’s plan for humanity.

In society in general good families make for good communities which make for good cities and states and ultimately for great countries.

As the family goes so does society. For this reason the Church honors the family but this is only part of the reason.

Most importantly, the family is, what Pope St. John Paul called, the domestic Church.

The family is the first place where every child should begin to learn about God. The parents are to model the Christian life to their children and in turn the siblings can model the Christian life to each other and then to the whole world.

There can be no greater model than the Holy Family of Nazareth.

In the gospel today the angel of the Lord appeared to Saint Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. Herod is going to search for the child to destroy him. Joseph rose and took the child and his

mother by night and departed for Egypt. He stayed until the death of Herod..."

Today, we saw Saint Joseph in his role as father protecting the infant Jesus and his mother Mary. He not only modeled the Christian life but guarded over the family entrusted to his care.

Every father must do the same.

Fortunately, in our society there probably won't arise any life threatening situations but it can and has happened.

Regardless, there is an even greater threat looming out there. This is where many fathers and even mothers fail in their responsibility toward the children entrusted to them.

Of course I'm talking about spiritual care. The father's role is vital to the care of his wife and children.

However, in our world, especially in recent decades, manhood has been under relentless attack. Who hasn't heard the expression toxic male? As if manhood itself is the problem.

Of course this is ridiculous because to agree with the premise would be to say that God made a mistake in creating human beings male and female. God doesn't make mistakes!

These direct attacks on manhood and fatherhood are ultimately indirect attacks on the manhood of Jesus Christ and the Fatherhood of God.

Unfortunately, many men have fallen prey to the attack. Consequently, a lot of men are not embracing their true dignity as the spiritual leaders of their families.

But don't just take it from me. Here are the real numbers if a father fails to take the lead as the spiritual head of his family.

If the father does not go to church, no matter how faithful his wife may be, the children are 10X less likely to go to church when they grow up. Only one in 50 will become regular church goers.

However, if the father is a regular church attendee then typically 65 – 75% of the children will follow in his footsteps. Sadly the same cannot be said of the mother. The statistics indicate that the father has the greater impact.

All this may be quite politically incorrect but it's written into our biology by our creator and heavenly Father – the earthly father has a very important and irreplaceable role to play in the life of the family and particularly in the eternal life of the family.

As I said, diminishing the father's role in the family has been a lengthy and concerted attack on the manhood of Jesus Christ and the Fatherhood of God.

So to our fathers and future fathers out there, biological, adoptive, or priestly, let's forget about political correctness and resolve, like Saint Joseph, to lead our families and our future families from the clutches of the Herod's of this world seeking to destroy our children, both physically and spiritually, before it is too late.