

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

The shepherds went in haste,
and found Mary and Joseph and the Infant
lying in a manger.

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

COLLECT

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

FIRST READING Ecclesiasticus 3:2-6, 12-14

A reading from the Book of Ecclesiasticus.
The Lord honours the father in his children,
and upholds the rights of a mother over her sons.
Whoever respects his father is atoning for his
sins,
he who honours his mother is like someone
amassing a fortune.
Whoever respects his father will be happy with
children of his own,
he shall be heard on the day when he prays.
Long life comes to him who honours his father,
he who sets his mother at ease is showing
obedience to the Lord.
My son, support your father in his old age,
do not grieve him during his life.
Even if his mind should fail, show him sympathy,
do not despise him in your health and strength;
for kindness to a father shall not be forgotten
but will serve as reparation for your sins.
The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM Ps 127 (128):1-5

Response:

**O blessed are those who fear the Lord and
walk in his ways!**

- O blessed are those who fear the Lord
and walk in his ways!
By the labour of your hands you shall eat.
You will be happy and prosper. (R.)

- Your wife like a fruitful vine
in the heart of your house;
your children like shoots of the olive,
around your table. (R.)
- Indeed thus shall be blessed
the man who fears the Lord.
May the Lord bless you from Zion
all the days of your life! (R.)

SECOND READING Colossians 3:12-21

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the
Colossians

You are God's chosen race, his saints; he
loves you and you should be clothed in
sincere compassion, in kindness and humility,
gentleness and patience. Bear with one
another; forgive each other as soon as a quarrel
begins. The Lord has forgiven you; now you
must do the same. Over all these clothes, to
keep them together and complete them, put
on love. And may the peace of Christ reign in
your hearts, because it is for this that you were
called together as parts of one body. Always be
thankful.

Let the message of Christ, in all its richness,
find a home with you. Teach each other, and
advise each other, in all wisdom. With gratitude
in your hearts sing psalms and hymns and
inspired songs to God; and never say or do
anything except in the name of the Lord Jesus,
giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Wives, give way to your husbands, as you
should in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives
and treat them with gentleness. Children, be
obedient to your parents always, because that
is what will please the Lord. Parents, never drive
your children to resentment or you will make
them feel frustrated.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia. May the peace of Christ
reign in your hearts;
let the message of Christ find a home with
you. Alleluia!

GOSPEL Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23

A reading from the holy Gospel according to
Matthew.

After the wise men had left, the angel of the
Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said,
'Get up, take the child and his mother with you,
and escape into Egypt, and stay there until I tell
you, because Herod intends to search for the
child and do away with him.' So Joseph got up
and, taking the child and his mother with him,
left that night for Egypt, where he stayed until
Herod was dead. This was to fulfil what the Lord
had spoken through the prophet: I called my
son out of Egypt.

After Herod's death, the angel of the Lord
appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and
said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother
with you and go back to the land of Israel, for
those who wanted to kill the child are dead.'
So Joseph got up and, taking the child and
his mother with him, went back to the land of
Israel. But when he learnt that Archelaus had
succeeded his father Herod as ruler of Judaea
he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a
dream he left for the region of Galilee. There he
settled in a town called Nazareth. In this way the
words spoken through the prophets were to be
fulfilled: 'He will be called a Nazarene.'

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

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,

(all bow during the next three lines)

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

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.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

We offer you, Lord, the sacrifice of conciliation,
humbly asking that,
through the intercession of the Virgin Mother of
God and Saint Joseph,
you may establish our families firmly in your
grace and your peace.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Our God has appeared on the earth, and lived
among us.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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.
Amen.

Sunday Message

THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY, JOSEPH

THE WORD

Year A • 28 December 2025 • Colour: White • Psalter Week 1



THE ESCAPE TO EGYPT

MATTHEW 2:13-15, 19-23

In today's Gospel, we witness the Holy Family's urgent flight into Egypt, escaping King Herod's deadly plan. Joseph's obedience to the angel's warning saves Jesus' life, highlighting God's protective care even amid danger.

This passage reminds us that faith often calls us to trust and act quickly, even when the future is uncertain. Joseph doesn't hesitate; he rises in the night to protect his family. Like him, we are invited to respond promptly to God's call, especially when it challenges our comfort or safety.

Herod's cruelty contrasts sharply with the gentle care of Mary and Joseph. Their journey into exile mirrors the struggles many endure—displacement, fear, and uncertainty. Yet, God's providence is clear: Jesus, the promised Messiah, is preserved to bring salvation.

The return from Egypt also fulfills ancient prophecy, reminding us that God's plan is unfolding, even through hardship.

As we reflect on this passage, let us ask ourselves: Are we ready to trust God's guidance in difficult moments? Can we, like Joseph and Mary, find courage and hope in uncertain times?

May this story encourage us to place our trust in God's loving protection, knowing that no matter what dangers surround us, God's plan for our life will never fail. ■

REFLECT

Today, on the Feast of the Holy Family, we reflect on the journey of Mary, Joseph, and Jesus—a family like no other, yet one who faced real struggles, fears, and uncertainties. In the Gospel, Joseph receives an urgent call from God to flee into Egypt to protect the child Jesus. Without hesitation, he rises and acts to keep his family safe.

This reminds us that faith is not always easy or comfortable. Sometimes, like Joseph, we are asked to trust and move forward into the unknown, even when we feel afraid. But the Holy Family shows us that in those moments, God's love and protection are with us, guiding each step.

Their journey was difficult—leaving home, stepping into unfamiliar lands—but it was through their courage and trust that God's plan was fulfilled. As we celebrate this feast, we remember that every family, in its joys and challenges, can find strength in God's presence.

So today, let us hold up the Holy Family as a model. Whether our families are perfect or struggling, may we follow Joseph's example—responding with faith, love, and courage. And may God's gentle care be with all our families, guiding us through every challenge and blessing us with hope. ■

SAY

**Loving God,
on this Feast of the Holy Family,
we thank You for the gift of family –
a place of love, strength, and faith.
Help us to follow Joseph's example
of trust and courage,
and Mary's example of gentle faith.
Be with all families, especially those
facing hardship or fear.
May Your love guide us, protect us,
and unite us in peace.
Amen.**

LEARN

St. Joseph, called the guardian of Jesus and the Church, teaches us the power of quiet faith and obedience. His prompt trust in God's call saved the Holy Family. The Church invites all families to follow this example—embracing challenges with patience and faith, trusting God's loving plan.

DO

Create a "Prayer Card" or "Prayer Tree" in the church where families can write down prayer intentions for their loved ones. Encourage parishioners to commit to praying for these families throughout the week, fostering a spirit of community care and support inspired by the Holy Family.

