

► Sunday, December 28, 2008, The Holy Family

Sir 3:2-6, 12-14; Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5; Col 3:12-21; Lk 2:22-40 or 2:22, 39-40

Week #19: Main Theme: God created families.

Today we celebrate the Holy Family—Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, who after enduring adversity in the flight into Egypt (the powerful of the earth continue in their attempt to destroy Jesus by destroying children), settle down in the home at Nazareth. It is astounding to think that God, who created the universe and everything in it, would consent to live for decades in a simple human family, being obedient to a father and mother that He created!

Of course, the Holy Family shows us a supernatural family, one founded on virginal love, with the ever-virgin Mary being the mother of a Child Who is none other than the Son of God the Father and with Saint Joseph giving himself over to safeguard those entrusted to his care. But though the Holy Family is unique, it shows the great dignity of the family, which is not some arbitrary cultural convention but God's own plan for the formation of new human beings. In the family, God brings together a man and a woman and allows them to participate in His creative power. Through the loving union of husband and wife, children are created and educated. This God-given structure of husband, wife, and children is good for the spouses and good for the children, as all the evidence from sociology tells us. One of the nation's leading experts on marriage, the sociologist David Popenoe, says that it is a fact that "families headed by married, biological parents are best for children." God's designs are always for our happiness; to live according to God's design for human nature is to live in a way that leads to happiness. The family is at the very heart of God's design for human nature.

Bulletin quote: "Man and woman were made 'for each other'—not that God left them half-made and incomplete: He created them to be a communion of persons, in which each can be 'helpmate' to the other, for they are equal as persons and complementary as masculine and feminine. In marriage God unites them in such a way that, by forming 'one flesh,' they can transmit human life: 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.'"

Catechism of the Catholic Church, #372

Suggested bulletin insert, if not used in the fall: "What the Church Teaches, Social Science Confirms: Marriage is Good for Husbands, for Wives and for Their Children"