

*Did you know . . .*

### **The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph**

Today is the Feast of the Holy Family, which occurs the first Sunday after Christmas (or on Dec. 30 if Christmas is on a Sunday). The feast is meant to recognize the union of Jesus, Mary and Joseph as a family unit.

“Scripture tells us practically nothing about the first years and the boyhood of the Child Jesus. All we know are the facts of the sojourn in Egypt, the return to Nazareth, and the incidents that occurred when the twelve-year-old boy accompanied his parents to Jerusalem. In her liturgy the Church hurries over this period of Christ's life with equal brevity. The general breakdown of the family, however, at the end of the past century and at the beginning of our own, prompted the popes, especially the far-sighted Leo XIII, to promote the observance of this feast with the hope that it might instill into Christian families something of the faithful love and the devoted attachment that characterize the family of Nazareth. The primary purpose of the Church in instituting and promoting this feast is to present the Holy Family as the model and exemplar of all Christian families.” (Excerpted from *With Christ Through the Year*, Rev Bernard Strasser, O.S.B.).

The Holy Family, just as every family, had problems that they had to face and overcome. Like us, the Holy Family had to “carry crosses,” such as the anxiety of having a “lost” child ([Luke 2:41-52](#)). Love for each other and God kept this family together.

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, in an address on Dec. 28, 2011, talked about the life of the Holy Family. He said, in part: “The Holy Family is an icon of the domestic Church, which is called to pray together. The family is the first school of prayer where, from their infancy, children learn to perceive God thanks to the teaching and example of their parents. An authentically Christian education cannot neglect the experience of prayer.”

Just as the Holy Family survived all its crises through love for each other and faith in God, let us pray that our families will follow this example.

*Judy Pearson*



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