



ST JOSEPH SYRO MALABAR CATHOLIC MISSION SAN DIEGO

15546 Pomerado Road, Poway CA 92064

[HTTP://WWW.SANDIEGOSYROMALABAR.COM](http://www.sandiegosyromalabar.com)

REV FR SONEY SEBASTIAN SVD

Sunday Readings and Meditation

December 31 Sunday, Second Sunday of Nativity

Holy Family flees to Egypt Mt 2:13-14; 19-23

Christmas and family are intimately linked. Christ came as a member of a human family to enable us to be part of God's family. So the first Sunday after Christmas is Family day, a day of praising God and giving him thanks for the Holy Family, our own family and belonging to the family of God.

It is said 'Home is where your heart is!' Everyone enjoys feeling at home in places where they can be themselves and with people who accept them and love them as they are. We do not choose our family; we are born into a family. We can make it a happy family by the role we play and the contribution we make to make everyone feel respected, cared for and loved. Christmas reminds us that God comes to us in the family and He is at home with us. Are we at home with God?

Paul's letter to the Colossians describes the cordial atmosphere that should reign in a Christian community, and in a Christian family. Fraternal love has to be the hallmark of the Christian community and every family is a small Christian community where love must prevail. In order that love might prevail in a Christian community and family every member has to do his or her bit; it is not the task only of the parents or the onus of the children alone to contribute to the family spirit. A harmonious atmosphere in the family can be maintained by the practice of the virtues of kindness, gentleness, mutual respect, patience and above all forgiveness. Parents should set an example for their children by the way they live their Christian lives.

In today's reading of Matthew's Gospel, we are told how God watches over the family of Jesus Mary and Joseph, guiding, guarding and protecting them from all harm. What he does for the family of Nazareth, he does for every family, for He is the giver and protector of all life. His care is seen in the wondrous way he inspires Joseph to rise and flee from the clutches of Herod. Joseph on his part implicitly trusts the divine inspiration he receives without questioning or trying to understand God's plan. He is unmindful of the hardships he and his family have to endure. He is faithful to his task of guarding and nurturing the divine life entrusted to him. After he has settled down in Egypt and the child is growing up, once again he is told to move and return to his former home in Nazareth. Joseph and Mary silently obey God's plan. In the gospel we see exemplified the primary obligation of parents, which is to love, care and protect their children. We see what Mary and Joseph did in order to ensure the safety of the child Jesus. As soon as they learned that his life was in danger, they uprooted themselves and went into exile. And when the danger had passed years later, they uprooted themselves again and returned to their native country. Many parents are called to make enormous sacrifices for their children. All parents can draw inspiration from the example of Mary and Joseph.



ST JOSEPH SYRO MALABAR CATHOLIC MISSION SAN DIEGO

15546 Pomerado Road, Poway CA 92064

[HTTP://WWW.SANDIEGOSYROMALABAR.COM](http://www.sandiegosyromalabar.com)

REV FR SONEY SEBASTIAN SVD

Afterwards the family settled in Nazareth hence the surname 'Nazarene.' From the time of his birth, Jesus was under the shadow of the cross. The Holy Family had its problems. Mary and Joseph wished to share the lot of this perplexing child, whom they follow, step by step, in the unfolding of his mystery. Our admiration should be awakened by their complete submission to God's will."

The seven 'C's of family life are: commitment, communication, compatibility, compassion, confession, conviviality, and children. They sum up today's readings about how to become a holy family instead of a broken family. When we speak of difficulties in our families, we have a lot to talk about: quarrels, unfaithfulness, disobedience, lack of respect, the misuse of money, and so many other things. But do we meet in our families the difficulty they were facing that day in Jerusalem? Do we ever ask ourselves whether we, as a family, are realistically and concretely interested in the will of the Father, in the Kingdom of God here on earth?"

Whether we live alone or in a family, whether we have plenty of relatives and friends or none, we can all be members of Jesus' new family. "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it." There is only one qualification: to hear the word of God and do it. Because Jesus extended his family, today's feast really belongs to all of us.

The church teaches that the Christian family is the first school of faith, a kind of mini-church into which God has placed us. It is the first place where we can experience intimate and loving relationships and can practice the art of giving and receiving love. So it's only natural that family relationships are central to a right relationship with God! It is not so much that we earn God's blessings by treating our parents well. Rather, as we learn a loving, respectful, self-sacrificing attitude toward others. Whether we are children relating to parents, parents to children, or brothers and sisters, our family relationships reveal a lot about our disposition toward God. And likewise, our love for God teaches us to love others, particularly those closest to us, who may be the most difficult to love.

Reconciliation is key here. It takes humility, trust, and courage to make this step, but God is with us, and he will guide us. So as you take time to reflect at the end of the year, consider the words that St. Paul spoke to families so long ago—and to us today: Clothe yourselves with . . . patience. Bear with one another and . . . forgive each other (Colossians 3:12-13). Today, in celebrating the Holy Family, we ask God's blessings on our own families. Family life is not meant to be lived in isolation. The world around it is not just there for its benefit. It should be united with, supporting and supported by the other families in the parish community and with the wider Church.

The mission of the family is identical to that of the whole Church: to give tangible witness to the vision of Christ for the world. Family is the micro-cosm of the church.

First Reading: Gen 1:26-28 Second Reading: Sir 3:1-9 Third Reading: Col 3:18-21