

Holy Family, 2009

“And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them ... And Jesus advanced in wisdom, and age, and grace with God and men.”

(Lk. 2:51–2)

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, in the lowly house at Nazareth – the greatest holiness in the humblest living conditions – God designed for all families to follow and imitate. The Church guided by the Holy Ghost takes the events which marked our Saviour's birth and His public life to recall each year this great example which Christian families have ever taken as their inspiration and which will always remain the sanctification of family life. Every family should strive to be a holy family — parents and children having devotion to the Holy Family which all families in the past practiced; and reminded themselves of every night before going to bed by praying the invocations:

“Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I give you my heart and my soul; Jesus, Mary and Joseph, assist me in my last agony; Jesus, Mary and Joseph, may I breathe forth my soul in peace with you. Amen.”



And in the morning prayer of today's Divine Office we recite an antiphon: Enlighten us, O Lord, by the example of Thy Family and direct our feet in the way of peace.”

Mary was the Virgin chosen by God, and granted the privilege of being conceived Immaculate, “full of grace” and was thus prepared as a worthy dwelling place of the Son of God made Man. St Joseph was chosen to be the most pure spouse of the Blessed Virgin; both were commissioned by God to be the head of His Holy Family on this earth. They fulfilled their duties before God in perfect love and holiness; yet the Child born of Mary was God made Man. And He was humbly subject to them. For thirty years he remained subject in the Holy House of Nazareth, until God's design for the public Mission, the revelation of the Kingdom was to be fulfilled.

There is an important lesson for all of us in humility and loving obedience. For this we must strive to be one with Christ as true children of God. Think of what it is to be a child of God. Remember those words of Sacred Scripture which describe what we

should be as Children of God: “And if sons, heirs also; heirs indeed of God, and joint heirs with Christ ... ”¹

How can we be joint heirs with Christ if we are not perfectly one with Him? Christ fulfilled the will of his Father by being “subject” to Mary and Joseph whom the Father placed over Him. How can we be one with Christ if we do not make ourselves humbly obedient to the authorities placed over us by Christ? Remember Our Lord’s very words — “He that is not with Me is against Me ... “He that gathereth not with Me scattereth”². Add to this the words of Christ to those He commissioned to guide and govern the Church: “He that heareth you, heareth me, He that despiseth you, despiseth Me”³. This is from the word of God; there can be no ifs or buts in this regard. To those who refuse to listen to the teaching of the Church as the doctrines develop organically from the tradition of Apostolic times and will continue to the end of time, the message is clear.

Let us turn to our heavenly Mother and St Joseph and beseech them for the grace of humility; that obedience by which we accept the guidance of the one whom Christ has placed over the Church as His Vicar to guide and shepherd it through the present times of danger and peril for souls.

“O Lord, Jesus Christ, in obeying Mary and Joseph, You consecrated family life with admirable virtues; grant that with the help of both of them we may learn from the example of Thy Holy Family and become a part of it for eternity.”

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¹ Rom. 8:17

² Matt. 12:30

³ Lk. 10:16