

1-11-2021

Holy Family - 26 December 2021

Anthony Doran

Follow this and additional works at: <https://researchonline.nd.edu.au/pastoral-liturgy>

 Part of the [Catholic Studies Commons](#), and the [Liturgy and Worship Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Doran, Anthony. "Holy Family - 26 December 2021." *Pastoral Liturgy* 52, no. 1 (2001): 1-5. <https://researchonline.nd.edu.au/pastoral-liturgy/vol52/iss1/24>

This Liturgical Resource is brought to you by ResearchOnline@ND. It has been accepted for inclusion in Pastoral Liturgy by an authorized administrator of ResearchOnline@ND. For more information, please contact researchonline@nd.edu.au.





26 December 2021

The Holy Family

Reflection by Anthony Doran

Introduction

Our joy at the birth of Jesus is not, cannot be contained in just one day of celebration yesterday. Rather it overflows into a whole week of celebration and rejoicing, including today's feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Let us continue to rejoice in this gift of God's love, made manifest for us in the new-born child of Bethlehem.

Penitential Act

Use one of the *Roman Missal* texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you humbly came into the world as a child.
Lord, have mercy.

You showed us how to love through our own lives.
Christ, have mercy.

You came so we could become children of the light.
Lord, have mercy.

First Reading

1 Samuel 1:20-22, 24-28

Today's first reading tells the story of another holy family, that of Elkanah and his wife, Hannah. When their son Samuel is born, Hannah dedicates him to service in the Temple as a gift in return for the gift of his birth.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 83:2-3. 5-6. 9-10. R v 5

How happy they who dwell in your house, O Lord.

In this psalm, devotion and love of God is expressed in devotion and love of the house of God, the Temple, which was considered to be the special dwelling place of God's presence on earth.

Second Reading

1 John 3:1-2, 21-24

This reflection from John's first Letter on the fact of our being children of God is appropriate in this season of the Incarnation. Through this mystery, we have been 'adopted' by God as God's own beloved children.

Gospel Reading

Luke 2:41-52

Apart from the infancy narratives, today's Gospel tells us almost all we know of the Holy Family. Unique to Luke's Gospel, we hear the story of the finding of the child Jesus in the Temple after three days. In this, it prefigures another story of finding Jesus, again, after three days.

Reflection

On this Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph, today's first reading from the First Book of Samuel tells the story of another family: that of Elkanah, Hannah and Samuel. Hannah had gone for many years without having a child, a situation that had caused her to become a laughing stock within her community. But these years of emptiness did not dim Hannah's faith in God. Every year she prayed for the gift of a child. When her prayer was finally answered, Hannah gave thanks for God's goodness and offered the child back to God. And as we read in today's reading, Hannah took the child Samuel back to the Temple, and "there she left him, for the Lord." (1 Sam 1:28). It might sound a bit strange to us, but Hannah's act points to her understanding in faith. She knows that her child is not her possession, but rather a gift from God. And is always a gift from God.

The Gospel Readings chosen for the feast of the Holy Family tell us all we know about the family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. The story we hear in the Gospel today is one that we all know well. Indeed, it is the fifth joyful mystery of the rosary. Luke tells us that the family of Mary and Joseph would travel every year to Jerusalem for Passover. And how, this particular year, the twelve-year-old Jesus stays in Jerusalem when the party starts its return journey. How Jesus was lost for three days. Those of you who have children can well imagine the distress and anxiety that Mary and Joseph must have felt. And when they finally find the boy, they are not especially interested that their son has been in conversation with the doctors and teachers of the Law. No – they rebuke the boy. As Mary says: "My child, why have you done this to us? See how worried your father and I have been, looking for you."

Jesus' response to Mary and Joseph almost seems out of character. Jesus sounds like a particularly obnoxious teenager: "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be busy with my Father's affairs?" Luke the evangelist then adds the post-script that Mary and Joseph did not understand what Jesus meant.

If we read this story as simply a narrative of historical events, yes, Jesus does sound obnoxious and Mary and Joseph will not understand what is going on. But this is no

historical narrative. It is a narrative of salvation. A revelation of the person and personality of Jesus.

To outward appearances, Jesus is simply the child of Mary and Joseph. But, he is also Son of the Father, possessing a unique and mysterious relationship with the Father. Jesus is the Father's gift to the world, to history, to all of creation. This mysterious relationship is revealed, little by little, through Jesus' obedience to the Father's will, through Jesus' concern for his Father's affairs. But the identity of Jesus will not be fully revealed until after Easter, when again, after three days, he will be found again, but in different circumstances.

This is why Mary and Joseph do not understand. Mary and Joseph are a bit like the disciples on the way to Emmaus after Easter. These disciples on the road to Emmaus did not understand for they were reading the events of the first Easter as a collection of historical events and not as the narrative of salvation. Mary and Joseph did not quite understand because, it seems, perhaps they were looking for human answers, when really the answer lay in the mystery of God's salvation of all people. An answer that will be made clear when the full reality of the relationship of Jesus and the Father will be revealed. An answer that only comes with the death and resurrection of Jesus. An answer that comes when the full identity of Jesus as the supreme expression of the Father's love for us is made known. And it becomes clear when the angel at the empty tomb announces that Jesus has been risen from the dead.



Open our hearts
to receive
Christ's light.

Prayer of the Faithful

Introduction

As we gather here today as God's people to honour the Holy Family of Nazareth, we turn to God with confidence that our needs will be heard.

Petitions

We pray for Pope Francis and all our Church leaders that through God's strength they will guide their flock in peace and integrity on the journey towards the Synod in 2023.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all the leaders of our world. May the leaders of wealthy countries be very conscious of the needs of developing countries during this pandemic.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who are sick and suffering in this world, particularly those suffering from effects of the pandemic. May they see God's compassion and mercy through those who care for them.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all families who are victims of violence and abuse. May they find safety, peace and a place to heal their bodies, minds and souls.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all families travelling during this holiday period. May they find courtesy and generosity on the roads and hospitality wherever they go.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who grieve for loved ones. May they find gentleness and compassion in those who care for them.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray elderly people in care facilities who no longer receive visits from family and friends. May those who they long for find the strength and compassion to visit them and patiently hold onto the person they knew and the person they see now.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Conclusion

Loving Father, you welcomed the children that came to you through the love of your Son and so we have confidence that you listen to our prayer, which we make through the guiding presence of the Spirit in the name of Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Music selections by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

GA

Angels we heard on high. French Noel. 286
Away in a manger. J. McFarland/ W. Kirkpatrick. 289
For the beauty of the earth. F. Pierpont/ D. Evans. 427
Joy to the world. I. Watts/ G. F. Handel. 295
Once in royal David's city. C. F. Alexander/ H. J. Gauntlett. 297
Ubi caritas/ Where true love and charity are found. Gregorian Chant. 319
Ubi caritas. Taize Chant. 324
Where there is charity and love. R. Connolly. 323

AOV1

For the beauty of the earth. F. Pierpont/ C. Krockner. 123
Joy to the world. I. Watts/ G. F. Handel. 170
What child is this? W. Dix. 165 (Verses 1-2)

AOV2

Angels we heard on high. French Noel. 286

AOV4Kids

Baby lying in a manger. P. Combe. 63

AOVNG

Among all. Chris de Silva. 8

CWB

Canticle of Simeon. Frank Quinn OP. 636
Once in royal David's city. Cecil Frances Alexander. 782
Sing of Mary, pure and lowly. Roland Ford Palmer SSJE. 808

CWBII

At last, all-pow'rful Master. The Grail. 225
Lord God, you now have set your servant free. Rae E. Whitney. 226
My master, see, the time has come. Frank Quinn OP. 227
Once in royal David's city. Cecil Frances Alexander. 269
There is nothing told. Didier Rimaud SJ, tr. Christopher Willcock SJ. 418
In the temple now behold him. Henry John Pye/William Cooke. 427

S&S2

Hail Mary: gentle woman. Carey Landry. 336

Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy

Psalm 83: *How happy they who dwell in your house, O Lord.*
Psalm 83: Peter Waters. CWB 194
Psalm 84: How happy they who dwell: Kevin Siddell. GA 48
Psalm 84 (83): Jenny O'Brien. JOBC pg. 20
Blessed are those who fear the Lord. LPC Tony Alonso. P.18

Music selections by Michael Mangan

Glory to God (TT/SYJ) [Gathering, Recessional]
Glory, gloria (STAR) [CHILDREN, Gathering, Recessional]
Sing new songs of joy (FWS/CWB II) *based on Ps 97 (98)*
This little boy (TT/SYJ) [Non-Scriptural Reflection - Gifts]