

Children's Liturgy at Home – The Holy Family (Yr. B) 31 Dec 2023

Preparation

- If you have your own crib figures then place them on a table along with a candle.
- If you don't have a crib then, in preparation for today, get the children to draw a nativity scene with Mary and Joseph, baby Jesus in the manger, the star, the shepherds and some animals in the stable!
- If you prefer use a Christmas card or picture of the nativity scene.

Introduction

Today is the feast of the Holy Family. As we look at our crib figures or nativity picture we remember Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus.

As we are gathered at home to pray with our closest family we remember that the Holy Family also prayed together. Even when there was no room at the Inn and they had to make do with the stable, Mary and Joseph praised God as they looked after the baby Jesus.

God has given us our families, to pray together and look after each other. We do this knowing that God is with us helping us always especially when times are difficult.

Let's begin our prayers:

Make the Sign of the Cross – a sign of the love God has for us.

An adult lights the candle.

Penitential Act

Adults and children think about how you have behaved in the past week. Especially when your daily routines are different just now. Have you shown patience to those around you? Have you been kind and helpful even when you don't feel like it and it's difficult?

Lead the children in singing the "Sorry Song".

We are sorry, *(To the Tune of Frere Jacques)*
Truly sorry,
Heal us Lord,
In Your love,
Help us to do better,
Help us to be kinder.
Forgive us,
Forgive us.

Gloria (Sung)

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to His people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King,
Almighty God and Father,
we worship You, we give You thanks,
we praise You for Your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ,
only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
You take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
You are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.
For You alone are the Holy One,
You alone are the Lord,
You alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of the Father.

Amen

All stand to welcome the Gospel singing the **Gospel Acclamation:**

(Sing to the tune of 'If You're Happy and You Know It)

"Alleluia, alleluia, praise the Lord,
Alleluia, alleluia, praise the Lord,

As we listen to the story,
let us praise him for his glory.
Alleluia, alleluia, praise the Lord."⁽¹⁾

Gospel (Luke 2:22-40)

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke

Explain and demonstrate – make three crosses: one on your forehead, one on your lips and one on your heart. In this way we think God's word, speak God's word, and keep God's word in our hearts as we say together:

“Glory to You, O Lord.”

<https://cafod.org.uk>Education>Children'sLiturgy>

Read the Gospel aloud to the children. At the end say:

“The Gospel of the Lord.”

All reply: **“Praise to You Lord Jesus Christ.”**

Lead a Discussion on the Gospel

Ask the children what happened in the Gospel today?

Mary and Joseph travelled to Jerusalem with baby Jesus.

Where did Mary and Joseph take Jesus and why?

They took Jesus to the temple, as it was the Jewish custom and law to present all firstborn baby boys to God.

Who were the two people they met there?

Simeon and Anna.

What did Simeon do and say?

Simeon took the child in his arms and praised God. He recognised that Jesus was the Son of God.

Anna also starts praising God when she sees baby Jesus and telling people that he is the Saviour. She knows that baby Jesus is the Son of God.

How do you think that Mary and Joseph felt when they heard what Simeon and Anna said?

They were amazed at what they said.

The Holy Family then returned home looking after Jesus as He grew up. In many ways the life of the Holy Family was similar to ours. Can you think of what ways?

They had daily chores to do, like cooking and cleaning, working and learning new things.

Some things were different. It was a long time ago and in lots of ways life was harder as they had to fetch water, rather than turning on a tap, and they had no electricity.

We are also part of a wider family – God’s family and the family of the church that we enter through the Sacrament of Baptism.

How do we show people that we belong to God’s family?

By looking after each other in our families, being good, hard working honest and kind to each other and by treating everyone we meet with kindness, helping them and sharing with them.

Prayers of the Faithful

Lord Jesus,

Thank you for our families and friends, and all those who look after and care for us. Help us to show your love to them.

Lord in Your Mercy
-Hear our Prayer

Lord Jesus,

Thank you for being born for us as the child in the manger on the first Christmas Day. You chose to be born into the poor and humble surroundings of a stable. Help us always to show your love to the poor and the homeless, by helping in any way we can, remembering that we are all God’s family.

Lord in Your Mercy
-Hear our Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

Amen

We can also say the following prayer as a **Spiritual Communion**.

(Anyone can do this at any age. Even if you have not made your first sacramental Holy Communion, or are unable to receive the sacrament of Holy Communion you can still make a spiritual communion by saying this prayer)

Spiritual Communion (Prayer of St. Alphonsus Liguori)

My Jesus,
I believe that You are present in the Most Blessed Sacrament.
I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul.
Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally,
come at least spiritually into my soul.
I embrace You as if You were already come,
and I unite myself wholly to You.
Never permit me to be separated from You.
Amen.

Conclusion

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

References

1. The Complete Children's Liturgy Book. Katie Thomson, published by Kevin Mayhew. P349