

Year A

Feast of the Holy Family

INTRODUCTION

Today we celebrate a day set aside to think about the Holy Family: Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

Light the candles and say Candle Prayer 3.

SORRY

Close your eyes and listen carefully to the words of this prayer:

God our father,
you sent us Jesus
to show how loving and kind you are.

Whenever we do something
that makes you sad with us,
we will remember your love for us
and will try harder to be good.

GLORIA

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

To welcome the Gospel today sing Acclamation 5.

GOSPEL (MATTHEW 2:13-15, 19-21, 23)

An angel sent by God appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Joseph, your family is in great danger! You must take Mary and Jesus to Egypt now, this very night, and stay there until I tell you that it is safe to return. King Herod wants to find Jesus and kill him."

So Joseph got up and they set off for Egypt that same night. When King Herod was dead, the angel returned just as he had said, and told Joseph that they could return to Israel. So the family went to live in Galilee, in a town called Nazareth.

DISCUSSION

Joseph had to save his family from terrible danger. What was that danger? King Herod wanted to find Jesus and kill him, because he believed that Jesus could be a King who might overthrow Herod.

Our families protect us from harm, too, but what other things are families for? Our families are there:

- for loving us (in what ways?)
- for caring for us (how?)
- for sharing (what things?).

Do the people in your family have different jobs to do? Some of these might be:

- going to work,
- cooking,
- gardening,
- walking the dog!

Sometimes we have to share these jobs, if someone is ill or busy.

Families are all about sharing. They share the good times and the bad times. Our families make us feel loved and safe.

There is one very big family, bigger than any of ours: it is God's family. God is our heavenly father and we are all his children. We are brothers and sisters who share his love.

ACTIVITY

Draw your family and write on each person's name. Fasten all the pictures on a board with the caption "God's Family."

CREED

CLOSING PRAYER

(The children can hold hands in a circle for the prayer.)

Dear Jesus, we thank you for our families
and the love we share.

We pray for our family, the Church,
and our brothers and sisters
all over the world.

As we begin a New Year,
we ask you to guide
and protect our families,
just as you did the Holy Family.

