

Feast of the Holy Family

Joy in the temple

INTRODUCTION

God sent his only son into the world to be born as a helpless baby. The Holy Family cherished and loved him until the time came for him to share his Good News with the world.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

As we light the candles today, let us remember the words of Jesus, who said:

I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will have the light of life and will never walk in darkness. (John 8:12)

SORRY

Ask the children to close their eyes and listen to this reading, before talking to God in their hearts and making a fresh start if they need to.

Lord, help me to store up my riches in heaven and not just on earth.

To know what is important so I don't waste my time on worthless things.

To always speak the truth, and do what you ask because of the love I have for you.

(Psalm 119:36-37, 43-44)

GLORIA

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

To welcome today's Gospel sing Acclamation 5.

GOSPEL (LUKE 2:22-40)

Mary and Joseph set off for the temple in Jerusalem to offer thanks to God, as was the custom after the birth of their first child. At the temple they met an old man called Simeon. Simeon was a kind and good man who was filled with the Holy Spirit. When Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the Temple, Simeon took him in his arms and said, "Thank you, Lord, for allowing me to see the saviour you promised." He blessed Mary and Joseph, and they were amazed by everything he said.

An old woman called Anna often prayed at the temple. When she saw Jesus she began to praise

God loudly and to tell everyone about the child who had come to save the world. When Mary and Joseph had done everything they were supposed to do, they returned to Nazareth in Galilee. Jesus grew into a strong and wise child, because he had been blessed by God.

DISCUSSION

What makes us a family? A family can be made up of a mother, a father, and a child or children. Or, it can be a group of several different people all living together. A family shares its experiences and love with the people who belong to it.

Who were the Holy Family and how were they like our families? In many ways they were probably very similar, sharing a home and belongings; loving and caring for each other; celebrating birthdays together, and doing everyday things like cleaning, going to work, and going to school.

In what ways would their family life have differed from ours? The daily life of the Holy Family would have been very different because they had no electricity, refrigerators, washing machines, or running water.

We all belong to the family of God, and because of this we are all brothers and sisters. We also belong to the Christian family, which we joined when we were baptized. We take our name from Christ.

A Christian chooses to follow Jesus by living as he taught us and by loving God and our neighbors with all our heart. We are all brothers and sisters who are able to call God our father.

ACTIVITY

Copy and cut out the face templates to represent the different peoples of the world. Cut out individual words or letters which together read, "One world, One family." Ask some of the children to color these faces or letters, while others color a central picture of the world. These can be glued onto cardboard and displayed.

CLOSING PRAYER

Dear Jesus, please bless our families.

Help us to be loving and forgiving, and help each of us remember that we are all brothers and sisters in the one family of God.

