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Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 | Col 3:12-21 | Mt 2:13-15, 19-23

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

In his Angelus address on the Feast of the Holy Family in 2001, St. John Paul II shared this with those gathered: “If we aspire to a deeper understanding of Jesus’ life and mission, we must draw close to the mystery of the Holy Family of Nazareth to observe and listen.” Following in the footsteps of the Holy Family in today’s Scripture, we find ourselves in quiet Bethlehem, just after the departure of the Magi. The angel of the Lord appears to Joseph in a dream, this time with a warning: “Rise, take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. Herod is going to search for the child to destroy him.” They trust in God and their response is immediate. It is easy for us to imagine the Holy Family as different from ourselves — holier and more spiritual. Certainly, that’s true. They were holy but they were also fully human, which means that what they attained is possible for each of us. Let us try to imitate them in this holiness.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

It’s easy to glamorize the life of Joseph, Mary, and Jesus, but in reality, the cross was with them long before the crucifixion. From the moment of the Annunciation, there would be trials, temptations, and sufferings. But each time, they respond with immediate obedience and deep trust. In doing so, they give us all a perfect example of what the Christian life should look like: a life motivated by love and always listening for the voice of God, ready to respond in an instant. As we accompany others on this journey of faith, we also must listen deeply to them in order to help them in discerning the Spirit’s movement in their lives. As we hone the spiritual muscle of attentive listening, we grow in our ability to respond to God and to God’s action in our lives, and to help others do the same.

REFLECT

Most of us will never hear from an angel in the middle of the night telling us to walk hundreds of miles with our baby in tow. But every single one of us will be — has been — called. Let us pray to the Holy Family for an increase in the virtues of obedience and trust, so that we can respond to God’s call in our lives.