

# Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Church

1110 Old Spanish Trail, Scott, LA 70583

[stspeterandpaulscott.org](http://stspeterandpaulscott.org)

337-235-2433

## Pastor:

Fr. Mark Derise

## Associate Pastor:

Fr. Jose Cherian

**Office Hours:** Mon - Thurs: 9 AM-12 PM, 1 PM-3 PM / Friday: 9 AM-12 PM

## Deacons:

Cliff Tanner &

Jake Prejean



### **Mass Schedule**

**Monday, Tuesday, Thursday** 12:10 PM

**Wednesday & Friday** 6:30 AM

**Saturday:** 4:00 PM

**Sunday:** 6:30 AM, 8:00 AM, & 10:00 AM

### **Rosary Schedule**

**Monday, Tuesday, Thursday** 11:30 AM

**Wednesday & Friday** 5:55 AM

**Saturday:** 3:15 PM

**Sunday:** 5:55 AM, 7:15 AM, & 9:15 AM

### **Confession:**

**Saturdays:** 3:00-3:45 PM or By appointment

### **Adoration**

**Mon:** 8AM-5PM **Wed:** 7AM-7PM **Fri:** 7AM-5PM

### **Mailing Address:**

1110 Old Spanish Trail  
Scott, LA 70583

### **Email:**

[stspeterandpaulscott@  
hotmail.com](mailto:stspeterandpaulscott@hotmail.com)

### **Fax:**

337-233-4868

### **School:**

337-504-3400

### **CCD:**

337-232-6167

### **Sts. Peter & Paul Staff**

**In Residence:** Bishop Emeritus Michael Jarrell

**Secretary:** Mary Beth Ardizone & Ursula Gouner

**Bulletin Editor:** Anne-Claire Viator

**Trustees:** Abby Aucoin & Brian Schlesinger

**Music Coordinator:** Jacqueline Savoie

**School Principal:** Danielle Babineaux

**Religious Education:** Bethany Duplechin,  
Janet Hebert, James Franke



Weekly Readings	Mass Intentions	
<p><b>Sunday:</b> <b>First Reading:</b> First Samuel 1: 20-22, 24-28 or Sirach 3: 2-6, 12-14 <b>Responsorial Psalm:</b> Psalms 84: 2-3, 5-6, 9-10 or Psalms 128: 1-2, 3, 4-5 <b>Second Reading:</b> First John 3: 1-2, 21-24 or Colossians 3: 12-21 <b>Alleluia:</b> Colossians 3: 15a, 16a or Acts 16: 14b <b>Gospel:</b> Luke 2: 41-52</p> <p><b>Monday:</b> <b>First Reading:</b> First John 2: 12-17 <b>Responsorial Psalm:</b> Psalms 96: 7-8a, 8b-9, 10 <b>Gospel:</b> Luke 2: 36-40</p> <p><b>Tuesday:</b> <b>First Reading:</b> First John 2: 18-21 <b>Responsorial Psalm:</b> Psalms 96: 1-2, 11-12, 13 <b>Alleluia:</b> John 1: 14a, 12a <b>Gospel:</b> John 1: 1-18</p> <p><b>Wednesday:</b> <b>First Reading:</b> Numbers 6: 22-27 <b>Responsorial Psalm:</b> Psalms 67: 2-3, 5, 6, 8 <b>Second Reading:</b> Galatians 4: 4-7 <b>Alleluia:</b> Hebrews 1: 1-2 <b>Gospel:</b> Luke 2: 16-21</p> <p><b>Thursday:</b> <b>First Reading:</b> First John 2: 22-28 <b>Responsorial Psalm:</b> Psalms 98: 1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4 <b>Alleluia:</b> Hebrews 1: 1-2 <b>Gospel:</b> John 1: 19-28</p> <p><b>Friday:</b> <b>First Reading:</b> First John 2: 29 – 3: 6 <b>Responsorial Psalm:</b> Psalms 98: 1, 3cd-4, 5-6 <b>Alleluia:</b> John 1: 14a, 12a <b>Gospel:</b> John 1: 29-34</p> <p><b>Saturday:</b> <b>First Reading:</b> First John 3: 7-10 <b>Responsorial Psalm:</b> Psalms 98: 1, 7-8, 9 <b>Alleluia:</b> Hebrews 1: 1-2 <b>Gospel:</b> John 1: 35-42</p>	<p><u>Saturday, December 28th-</u> <b>4:00 PM</b>—Mary Ann Dugas (D) / David L. Prejean / Sheilah Resweber (D) / Kenny Beough (D) / Dupre &amp; Teresa Hebert (D) / M/M Adley Scrantz (D) / Raymond Begnaud (D)(HBD) / Paul A. Arceneaux (D)(HBD) / Louis Dupuy / Alberie &amp; Inez Barras (D) / Lee &amp; Ida Bergeron (D) / Cleveland Arnould &amp; fly (D) / Ignace Domingue &amp; fly (D) / M/M William Stutes &amp; fly (D) / Curley/Mim Guidry (D) / Ronald Hebert (D) / Dustin Mayon (D) / Anita Davidson (D) / Jody Vaccarella (D) / David/Marleen Arnaud (D) / Ray/Mable Brasseaux (D) / Mike Matthieu (D) / Michael Chau Tang (D) / Valencia Brown (L)(HBD) / Ronald L. Baudoin (D) / Marie Falcon Hebert (D)</p>	
	<p><u>Sunday, December 29th-</u> <b>6:30 AM</b>—For the People</p> <p><b>8:00 AM</b>—Carol Lacy (L)(HBD) / Dustin Wiltz (D) / Joan Firmin (D) / Spiritual Healing (D) / Michael Chau Tang (D) / Douglas Brown (L)(HBD)</p> <p><b>10:00 AM</b>—Michael O’Neil Mouton (D) / Rayford Domingue (D) / Deanna Sonnier (D) / Eloi Comeaux Jr. (D) / John B. Sonnier Family / Rosamarie Reyes-Silva (D) / Poochie Frederick (D) / Michael Allain (D) / Jerry D. Guidry (D) / M/M Errol Robichaux (D) / Ms. Belinda Thibodeaux (L) / Mr. Doyle Brashear (D) / Paul/Myrtle Breaux (D) / Louella / Buck Ransonet (D) / M/M Guy Martin Sr. (D) / M/M Harold Brashear (D) / Matt &amp; Laura Cormier / Murphy Sr. &amp; Hazel Stoute/ Mason &amp; Laura Guidry</p>	
	<p><u>Monday, December 30th-</u> <b>12:10 PM</b>—Michael Chau Tang (D) / Todd Henry (D)(ANN)</p>	
	<p><u>Tuesday, December 31st-</u> <b>4:00 PM</b>—Michael O’Neil Mouton (D) / Ted Moon Jr. (D) / Louis Dupuy / Charlene Rushing (L) / Michael Chau Tang (D) / Etis Bertrand (D) / Constance Martel (D) / The Holy Souls in Purgatory (D) /M/M Adley Scrantz (D) / M/M Loney Hebert, Sr. (D)</p>	
	<p><u>Wednesday, January 1st-</u> <b>7:00 AM</b>—Joan Firmin (D)</p> <p><b>9:00 AM</b>—Rayford Domingue (D) / Michael Allain (D) / Curley Menard (D)(ANN) / M/M Alex Lantier (D) / Vincent Family (L) / Murphy Stoute, Sr. (D)(HBD) / M/M Davy Hollier (D) / M/M Hubert Leger, Sr. (D) / M/M Clam Duhon (D) / M/M Hubert Leger, Jr (D) / Forest P. Duhon (D)</p>	
	<p><u>Thursday, January 2nd-</u> <b>NO MASS</b></p>	
	<p><u>Friday, January 3rd-</u> <b>6:30 AM</b>—George W. Stoute (D)(ANN) / Gerald &amp; Louella Savoy (D) / Souls in Purgatory (D) / M/M Larry Hebert (D) / M/M Earl Tanner, Sr. (D) / Stratton Hebert (L)(HBD) / Ale &amp; Grace Prejean (D)</p>	
<p><b>COLLECTION FOR 12/22/2024</b></p> <p>Regular Offertory: \$ 9,970.60</p> <p>Envelopes used this weekend: Regular: 200 <i>Thank you for your generous spirit of giving!</i></p>	<p><b>Question of the Week:</b> How can I help my family be more reflective of the Holy Family? What difficulties stand out in our family life?</p>	<p>On this feast of the Holy Family we are reminded of another family we belong to: the family of God. Hannah offered her son, whom she had struggled to conceive, to the LORD, to serve God as long as he lived. John reminds us that we are children of God and that if we love one another, Jesus remains in us and we in him. In the Gospel, Jesus chooses to remain in the temple for it is his Father's house. As we too sit in our Father's house and listen to God's word, may we be reminded that we too are a part of a holy family.</p>

## The Family as Communion of Love

***When they had fulfilled all the prescriptions of the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him. Luke 2:39–40***

Today we honor family life in general by pausing to ponder the particular and beautiful hidden life within the home of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. In many ways, their daily life together would have been very similar to other families at that time. But in other ways, their life together is entirely unique and provides us with a perfect model for all families.

By God's providence and design, the family life of Jesus, Mary and Joseph was spoken of in the Scripture very little. We read of the birth of Jesus, the presentation in the Temple, the flight into Egypt and the finding of Jesus in the Temple at age twelve. But other than these stories of their life together, we know very little.

The line from today's Gospel quoted above does, however, give us some insight worth pondering. First, we see that this family "fulfilled all the prescriptions of the law of the Lord..." Though this is in reference to Jesus being presented in the Temple, it should also be understood to apply to all aspects of their life together. Family life, just like our individual lives, must be ordered by the laws of our Lord.

The primary law of the Lord regarding family life is that it must share in the very unity and "communion of love" found in the life of the Most Holy Trinity. Each person of the Holy Trinity has perfect respect for the other, gives selflessly to each other without reserve, and receives each person in their totality. It is their love that makes them one and enables them to act together in perfect harmony as a communion of divine Persons. Though Saint Joseph was not immaculate in his nature, the perfection of love did live in his divine Son and in his immaculate wife. This overwhelming gift of their perfect love would have daily drawn him into the perfection of their lives.

Ponder your own closest relationships today. If you are blessed with a close family, ponder them. If not, ponder the persons put into your life who you are called to love with familial love. Who are you to be there for in good times and in bad? Who are you to sacrifice your life for without reserve? Who are you to offer respect, compassion, time, energy, mercy, generosity and every other virtue? And how well do you fulfill this duty of love?

Reflect, today, upon the fact that God wants you to share in a communion of life, not only with the Most Holy Trinity but also with those around you, especially your family. Try to ponder the hidden life of Jesus, Mary and Joseph and seek to make their family relationship the model for how you love others. May their perfect communion of love be a model for us all.

***Lord, draw me into the life, love and communion that You lived with Your Immaculate Mother and Saint Joseph. I offer You myself, my family and all those to whom I am called to love with a special love. May I imitate Your family love and life in all my relationships. Help me to know how to change and grow so that I may more fully share in Your family life. Jesus, I trust in You.***

### PLEASE PRAY FOR PRIESTS

We thank you, God our Father, for those who have responded to your call to priestly ministry. Accept this prayer we offer on their behalf; Fill your priests with the sure knowledge of your love. Open their hearts to the power and consolation of the Holy Spirit. Lead them to new depths of union with your Son. Increase in them profound faith in the Sacraments they celebrate as they nourish, strengthen and heal us.

**Lord Jesus Christ**, grant that these, your priests, may inspire us to strive for holiness by the power of their example, as men of prayer who ponder your word and follow your will.

**O Mary, Mother** of Christ and our mother, guard with your maternal care these chosen ones, so dear to the Heart of your Son. Intercede for our priests that, offering the Sacrifice of your Son, they may be conformed more each day to the image of your Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

### Vocation Prayer

O God, we earnestly ask You to bless this diocese with many priests, brothers, and sisters who will love You with their whole strength and gladly spend their entire lives to serve Your Church and to make You known and loved. Bless our families, bless our children, choose from our homes those needed for Your work. Mary, Queen of the Clergy, pray for us, pray for our priests, religious, and deacons. Obtain for us many more.

**Amen.**

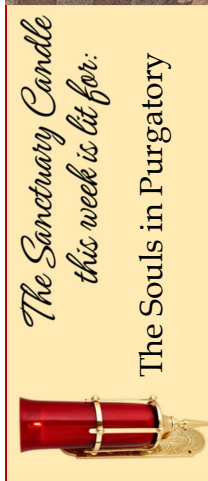
### LET US PRAY DAILY FOR OUR PRIESTS, SEMINARIANS, AND DEACONS OF THE DIOCESE OF LAFAYETTE

December 29th	Rev. Michael Moody, SVD	Matthew Authement	Dcn. Joseph Ulysse Joubert
December 30th	Rev. Randall Moreau	Roy Bertrand IV	Dcn. George Jourdan
December 31st	Rev. Joseph Nasser, SJ	Bennett Bodin	Dcn. Jim Kincel
January 1st	Pope Francis	Rev. Blake Dubroc, Dir. Of Vocations and Seminarians	Dcn. Brian Kirk
January 2nd	Bishop J. Douglas Deshotel	Seminary Faculty, Parents and Benefactors	Dcn. Robert C. Klingman, Jr.
January 3rd	Bishop Emeritus Michael Jarrell	Reid Bourgeois	Dcn. Denis Lacroix
January 4th	Rev. James Bam Nguyen	Nicholas Broussard	Dcn. Dennis Landry





Mary and Joseph find Jesus teaching in the temple.



Visit our ACTS Retreat page on the Sts. Peter & Paul Church Website—[stspeter-andpaulscott.org](http://stspeter-andpaulscott.org)—for more information on ACTS, upcoming retreat dates & the applications to apply. The information can be found under ACTS.

# ATTENTION!!!!

## Baptismal Information

**\*YOU MUST BE A REGISTERED & PRACTICING PARISHIONER\***

Parents must fill out a Baptismal Registration Form and Godparents must fill out a Baptismal Godparent Form. They can be found on the church website ([www.stspeterandpaulscott.org](http://www.stspeterandpaulscott.org)) under sacraments.

You must bring the forms to the Church Office.

You will then have to make an appointment with Fr. Mark.

After approval by Fr. Mark, parents and godparents must attend a Baptism Preparation Class.

**Criteria for Godparents:** Must be at least 16 years old, confirmed, and a practicing Catholic. They must be able to receive communion & in good standing. Non-Catholic godparents are highly discouraged. They will **NOT** appear on the baptismal certificate!

### Baptismal Class Schedule:

2nd Tuesday of every other month, from 6 PM to 7 PM

January 14th

July 8th

March 11th

September 9th

May 13th

November 11th



## ENGAGED COUPLES!

Spend a weekend away from the cares and distractions of everyday living.

### Attend a Catholic Engaged Encounter Weekend.

It is open to any engaged couple wanting to prepare for a deeper more meaningful life together in a Sacramental Marriage recognized by the Catholic Church according to its Church law.

Weekend dates for 2025 are **Jan. 24-26, Mar. 21-23, and Sept. 26-28.**

The cost of the weekend is \$275. A \$125 non-refundable deposit is required to secure a reservation.

To learn more, visit our website [www.ceelafayette.org](http://www.ceelafayette.org) or contact Mike & Phyllis Totaro at 337-962-5798 (Phyllis) or [reginfo.ceelaf@gmail.com](mailto:reginfo.ceelaf@gmail.com)

## CHRISTMAS SEASON MASS TIMES 2024:

### Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God:

**Tuesday, December 31st:**

(anticipated) 4 pm

**Wednesday, January 1st:**

7 am & 9 am



## Altar Servers Needed for Sacred Liturgy

Any young person aged 10 to 18 is invited to join the ranks of the Alter Servers of Sts. Peter & Paul Catholic Church. If you are interested in learning more about the Sacred Liturgy of Holy Mother Church then altar serving is for you.

Please call the church office (337.235.2433) to sign up to be an Altar Server.



# January

PARISH LIFE SPPS SCHOOL EVENTS  
FEAST/SPECIAL DAYS C - CHURCH H - HALL

SUN

MON

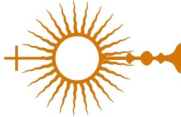

TUES

WED

THURS

FRI

SAT

<b>ADORATION:</b>  MON: 8AM-5PM WED: 7AM-7PM FRI: 7AM-5PM	<b>DAILY ROSARIES</b> MON, TUES, & THURS: 11:30 AM WED & FRI: 5:55 AM SAT: 3:15 PM SUN: 5:55, 7:15, & 9:15 AM 		<b>1 SPPS C H R I S T M A S</b> 2 CLJ 6:15 PM H NO 12:10 MASS & ROSARY OFFICE CLOSED MEN'S PG 5AM BOURQUE'S BAR MEN'S BS 6AM COFFEE DEPOT ROSARY (E) 5:55 AM C	<b>B R E A K</b> 3 6:30 AM MASS ROSARY (E) 5:55 AM C	<b>4</b> CONFESSION 3PM C ROSARY 3:15 PM C MASS 4PM
<b>5 THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD</b> COLLECTION: 1-WEEKLY COLLECTION 2-BUILDING FUND MASS: 6:30 AM 8:00 AM 10:00 AM CLJ 6PM H ROSARY: 5:55 AM 7:15 AM 9:15 AM C	<b>6 RETURN TO SCHOOL</b> REGISTRATION FOR '25-'26 NEW STUDENTS OPEN 12:10 PM MASS WOMEN'S BS 6AM ZOOM ROSARY 11:30AM C	<b>7 REPORT CARD DAY</b> CCD SAFE ENVIRONMENT GRADES 1-4 12:10 PM MASS CLJ 9:30AM H ROSARY (F) 11:30AM C	<b>8 WOMEN'S SPIRITUAL GROUP</b> 6PM 6:30 AM MASS CHILDREN'S CHOIR 5:30PM C ADULT CHOIR 6:15PM C ROSARY (E) 5:55 AM C	<b>9 KNIGHT OF THE MONTH</b> SCHOOL MASS 8:30 AM RCIA 6:15PM H 12:10 PM MASS MEN'S PG 5AM BOURQUE'S BAR MEN'S BS 6AM COFFEE DEPOT ROSARY 11:30AM C	<b>11</b> CONFESSION 3PM C ROSARY 3:15 PM C MASS 4PM
<b>12 BAPTISM OF THE LORD</b> COLLECTION: 1-WEEKLY COLLECTION MASS: 6:30 AM 8:00 AM 10:00 AM CLJ 6PM H ROSARY: 5:55 AM 7:15 AM 9:15 AM C	<b>13</b> 12:10 PM MASS WOMEN'S BS 6AM ZOOM ROSARY 11:30AM C	<b>14 CCD SAFE ENVIRONMENT</b> BAPTISM PREPARATION CLASS 6 PM TO 7 PM 12:10 PM MASS CLJ 9:30AM H KC MEETING 6:30PM KCH ROSARY (F) 11:30AM C	<b>15</b> 6:30 AM MASS CATHOLIC DAUGHTER MEETING H CHILDREN'S CHOIR 5:30PM C ADULT CHOIR 6:15PM C ROSARY (E) 5:55 AM C	<b>16</b> SCHOOL MASS @ 8:30 AM RCIA 6:15PM H 12:10 PM MASS MEN'S PG 5AM BOURQUE'S BAR MEN'S BS 6AM COFFEE DEPOT ROSARY 11:30AM C	<b>18</b> CONFESSION 3PM C ROSARY 3:15 PM C MASS 4PM CATHOLIC DAUGHTER MASS 4PM
<b>19 2ND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME</b> COLLECTION: 1-WEEKLY COLLECTION 2-MAINTENANCE FUND MASS: 6:30 AM 8:00 AM 10:00 AM CLJ 6PM H ROSARY: 5:55 AM 7:15 AM 9:15 AM C	<b>20 NO SCHOOL (MLK, JR. DAY)</b> 12:10 PM MASS WOMEN'S BS 6AM ZOOM ROSARY 11:30AM C	<b>21</b> ELEMENTARY CCD H TEXAS ROADHOUSE SPIRIT KNIGHT 12:10 PM MASS CLJ 9:30AM H ROSARY (F) 11:30AM C	<b>22</b> 6:30 AM MASS CHILDREN'S CHOIR 5:30PM C ADULT CHOIR 6:15PM C ROSARY (E) 5:55 AM C	<b>23</b> SCHOOL MASS @ 8:30 AM RCIA 6:15PM H 12:10 PM MASS MEN'S PG 5AM BOURQUE'S BAR MEN'S BS 6AM COFFEE DEPOT ROSARY 11:30AM C	<b>25</b> CONFESSION 3PM C ROSARY 3:15 PM C MASS 4PM
<b>26 3RD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME</b> COLLECTION: 1-WEEKLY COLLECTION 2-BISHOP'S SERVICES APPEAL MASS: 6:30 AM 8:00 AM 10:00 AM---CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK MASS 9:15 AM C CLJ 6PM H BAPTISMS 10AM	<b>27</b> 12:10 PM MASS WOMEN'S BS 6AM ZOOM ROSARY 11:30AM C	<b>28</b> ELEMENTARY CCD H 12:10 PM MASS CLJ 9:30AM H ROSARY (F) 11:30AM C	<b>29</b> 6:30 AM MASS CHILDREN'S CHOIR 5:30PM C ADULT CHOIR 6:15PM C ROSARY (E) 5:55 AM C	<b>30</b> SCHOOL MASS @ 8:30 AM RCIA 6:15PM H 12:10 PM MASS MEN'S PG 5AM BOURQUE'S BAR MEN'S BS 6AM COFFEE DEPOT ROSARY 11:30AM C	<b>31</b> SPIRIT DAY REGISTRATION CLOSING 6:30 AM MASS ROSARY (E) 5:55 AM C



## The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph

It is amazing that God chose to enter our fallen human condition by becoming Incarnate in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary. He was born of her, raised by her and Saint Joseph, acquired human knowledge through their teaching, worked with His hands, experienced the fullness of human society, and did so within the context of an earthly family. Jesus, Mary, and Joseph made up a sacred family, the Holy Family. Today's feast continues our Christmas Day celebration. This feast falls within the octave of Christmas that culminates January 1 with the Solemnity of the Mother of God. Though the earthly life shared by Jesus, Mary, and Joseph has always been a source of prayer and inspiration, the feast we celebrate today is relatively new. In 1890, Pope Leo XIII issued his encyclical *Sapientiae Christianae* (On Christians as Citizens) in which he emphasized the duties of Christians as citizens in a changing world. At that time, the holy father was concerned about the negative impact that the Industrial Revolution, secularism, and new political ideologies—such as communism—were having upon Christian citizens and the family in particular. He feared that the desire for economic advancement and the communistic separation of God from the political structures would result in the breakdown of the family, the fundamental building block of society. In that encyclical, the Holy Father stated: *This is a suitable moment for us to exhort especially heads of families to govern their households according to these precepts, and to be solicitous*

*without failing for the right training of their children. The family may be regarded as the cradle of civil society, and it is in great measure within the circle of family life that the destiny of the States is fostered. Whence it is that they who would break away from Christian Discipline are working to corrupt family life, and to destroy it utterly, root and branch.* In 1892, Pope Leo XIII issued an apostolic letter, *Breve Neminem Fugit*, in which he highlighted the importance of the Holy Family for the world as a model for every virtue necessary for human growth. *To all fathers of families, Joseph is verily the best model of paternal vigilance and care. In the most holy Virgin Mother of God, mothers may find an excellent example of love, modesty, resignation of spirit, and the perfecting of faith. And in Jesus, who was subject to his parents, the children of the family have a divine pattern of obedience which they can admire, reverence, and imitate.* In 1893, Pope Leo XIII instituted the Feast of the Holy Family as a liturgical celebration to be celebrated in any diocese that requested it. The feast continued to spread, bringing about a renewed appreciation for the sacredness of family life. In 1921, three years after the end of World War I, Pope Benedict XV, sharing the concerns of his predecessor Pope Leo XIII, added the Feast of the Holy Family to the universal Church calendar. In 1964, while making an apostolic visit to the Holy Land, Pope Paul VI gave a beautiful speech in Nazareth on the Holy Family. This speech is now included in the Office of Readings for the Feast of the Holy Family. He begins by saying, "Nazareth is a kind of school where we may begin to discover what Christ's life was like and even to understand his Gospel. Here we can observe and ponder the simple appeal of the way God's Son came to be known, profound yet full of hidden meaning." In that speech, the Holy Father wanted to help make Jesus' family life, culture, and daily interactions as a child tangible and relatable to all so that His childhood, along with the role of His parents, would be a source of reflection for the strengthening of the family. In 1981, Pope John Paul II, in his apostolic exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* (The Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World), reinforced the concept of the family as the "domestic church" with its role in fostering prayer, teaching the faith, and nurturing Christian virtues. He highlighted that in the family, the Christian faith is first proclaimed to children, making the family vital to the mission of the Church, and the most fundamental institution in the world. As we honor the Holy Family, one of the best ways to do so is to prayerfully ponder the daily life that the Holy Family shared. Because Scripture does not record many of their family interactions in Nazareth, much is left to our prayerful imagination. What we do know is that human familial virtue within the Holy Family, especially between mother and Son, was at a level of perfection. The kindness, respect, obedience, unity, charity, and every other Christian virtue that they lived must become the model for Christian living and for family life. The Holy Family began with apparent scandal when Mary became pregnant while betrothed to Joseph. Mary and Joseph suffered through the gossip and misunderstandings this miraculous pregnancy brought with it. Though Joseph learned of this conception from an angel in a dream, it was his faith and righteousness that empowered him to remain faithful to Mary and love her with a pure heart. Their family began in Bethlehem, in poverty and rejection. They then fled to Egypt to protect their Child from the paranoia and cruelty of Herod. They later returned to Nazareth and lived faithfully with family and friends. Jesus learned the trade of woodworking from Joseph, grew in wisdom and knowledge, spoke with the elders in the Temple at the age of twelve, and remained obedient to his earthly parents. Saint Thomas Aquinas teaches us that Jesus had direct knowledge of the Beatific Vision from the moment of His conception and had the fullness of infused knowledge. But He also grew in acquired knowledge, learning with a human mind through sensory experience and conceptual understanding. Mary and Joseph watched this growth, participated in it, grew from it themselves, and Mary "pondered all these things in her heart" (Luke 2:51). As you ponder their inner family dynamics, relationships, and charity, use them as a model of how best to relate to your own family. Some families more fully imitate those sacred virtues; others fall gravely short. Look into your own heart and ask the Holy Family to teach you how to show greater love to those in your family. Though you will never arrive at perfection, you can receive inspiration from their lives, leading to greater growth and unity, making your own family a greater source of strength for your Christian living.



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