

Holy Family 2024

The notion of the family is probably one of the most abused and ridiculous illusions portrayed at the Christmas time of year. It begins in the months before Christmas with images of happy smiling faces on advertisements selling further fantasies linked to products. There is the aspiration of giggling joy enhanced by alcohol.

That which is not true can never nourish

That which is an illusion can never satisfy.

Thus the feast of the Holy family is wonderful if we look beyond the romantic projections of fantasy.

So first of all see. The holy family does not fit any standard model of what is said a family should be. The Blessed Virgin Mary who is betrothed but not married to St Joseph gives birth to her only son.

In all the history of our culture this has got to be a unique family.

Different. Not fitting into any accepted notions of what is comfortable.

Just like your family

In all the history of our culture there has never been a family totally like yours.

Your family does not fit into the mould created by accepted norms

There are certain familiarities with all

However every family is unique, as the holy family is unique.

Every family is different

Thanks be to God

Then there are the immediate practical difficult necessity's to be dealt with.

The Holy Family has nowhere to stay

Mother and child need warmth and whatever shelter is available

There are these strange visitors

So stunned by the beauty still this family must deal with the dangers

Just like your family

From the provision of the rent or mortgage

To the production of the meals, and supply of children's cloths.

Then on to the education or liberation of what will become young adults

Lives different and dangerous

There are certain familiarities with all
However every family is unique, as the holy family is unique.

Every family is different

Thanks be to God

Then there is the influence

Here the example of St Joseph is quite stunning

This is the foster Father who taught Jesus what being a father meant

This man who was a real part of the formation of the infant Christ

When Jesus taught the Apostles to Say

“Our Father who art in Heaven”

Then it was the love of that foster father that inspired the imagery

St Joseph was a massive component in the realisation of the Christ.

Just as you are a massive component in the formation of the lives of each of your family

Each member unique

There are certain familiarities with all

However every family is unique, as the holy family is unique.

Every family is different

Thanks be to God

On the feast of the Holy Family

Recognise that your family does not fit into any accepted model of what should be

Recognise that there are things to do, responsibilities to be addressed

Recognise the crucial role that you play willingly or unwillingly in the formation of those you love

Do not compare your family with the fantasy of the accepted norm

Compare your family with the reality of the Gospel

Unique

Practical

Essential