

FATHER SCHULTE HOMILY
The Holy Family
December 27, 2020

My Brothers and Sisters,

Christmas day has come and gone. But its effects remain with us, and there are a number of important feast days within the immediate eight days of Christmas (octave). The “octave” of Christmas includes Christmas day up until the first of January. The “Christmas Season” continues on until the “Baptism of our Lord” which occurs on January 10th this year.

And so, the theme of Christmas continues on for several days, and the feasts within this time are:

- St. Stephen -- the First Martyr.
- The Holy Innocents – Martyrs.
- Thomas Becket – Martyr.

The birth of Christ points to the cross and this is represented by these martyr feast days.

- The Epiphany – revealing the Son of God to the Magi – and therefore to the world.
- Two American Saints:
 - Elizabeth Ann Seton – parochial school.
 - John Neumann – parochial school.
- The Feast of the Holy Family – first Sunday in the octave of Christmas.
- January 1 – Mary as the Mother of God.

Our focus today is on the Holy Family – Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. This family becomes the model for all Christian families.

The church has written extensively on the life and importance of the family. Pope John Paul II dedicated an entire encyclical on the subject of the family called “Familiaris Consortio”.

The family is the original Divine Institution other than the church. In the beginning, God created the Family; Man, Woman, and Children and established its purpose.

The church and scripture teach us that a family is one man, one woman, and their children. The family is the fundamental building block of God’s church and all of society.

As an indicator of the families’ great significance, the creator chose to reveal himself visibly in a family. This is why the Feast of the Holy Family is so closely associated with Christmas.

All Christian families model themselves on the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

The marriage of a man and woman and to start a family is a vocation, a divine calling.

Mary was chosen (called) by God to be the Mother of His Son. God chose Joseph to be her husband on earth. Within this marriage of man and woman, God sent his Son Jesus, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, not by Joseph.

- Mary and Joseph were chaste before marriage and were chaste afterwards.

Scripture speaks of their role as husband and wife.

- Joseph was given by God complete authority to care for and govern the Holy Family – and Mary understood this and followed his leadership; such as when they went to Egypt and returned.
- Mary cared for the child Jesus as an authentic Mother. She fed, clothed, and helped to teach him.
- Jesus was obedient to his parents. This shows us how completely God lived according to the family plan that he established from the beginning. He did not create special circumstances for himself.
- There was a hierarchy of authority in the Holy Family.
 - Joseph was obedient to God.
 - Mary followed Joseph's direction.
 - Jesus was obedient to Mary and Joseph.
- Obviously, Jesus was a model child. Scripture tell us that Jesus was recognized as being the son of Joseph.
- Joseph was, therefore, the perfect Father and model for Jesus, the perfect Son.

As Jesus was recognized as the Son of Joseph and Mary; people recognize our children as being children of specific parents, and the quality of parenting the children received.

Properly parented children:

- Are clothed and well fed.
- They are well mannered.
- They conduct themselves responsibly.
- They are charitable toward others.

- They respect those in authority (especially parents).
- They are pious in their faith (i.e., they practice it).

All of Western civilization was built upon Christianity and the Christian family.

- The founding fathers of America said that our form of government can only survive within a moral people. Jesus, Mary, and Joseph are the model Christian family, and all Christian believers strive to imitate them. They are the models of morality.

There are some enemies of authentic family life:

- Selfishness
- Laziness
- Adultery
- Abortion
- Contraception
- Divorce
- Same sex marriage (all homosexual acts)
- Communism (goal is to eradicate the Christian family)
- And others.

All of these are a contradiction to the Holy Family and authentic family life.

On this Feast of the Holy Family, let us open our hearts to Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Let us follow their example with courage and conviction.