

## Homily for the Feast of the Holy Family

*(Sirach 3:2–6, 12–14; Colossians 3:12–21; Matthew 2:13–15, 19–23)*

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Today, on the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, the Church places before us not an abstract ideal, but a real family—one that lived in faith, obedience, struggle, and trust in God. In a world where the meaning of family is often confused, weakened, or even rejected, this feast speaks with renewed urgency: the family is not outdated; the family is essential.

Many ask: *Is the family still relevant in the 21st century?* The Word of God answers clearly: Yes—more than ever.

The family is where life begins, where love is first experienced, where faith is first taught, and where values are first formed.

The First Reading from Sirach reminds us that the stability of society depends on honour within the family:

“Whoever honours his father atones for sins... kindness to a father will not be forgotten” (Sir 3:3,14).

A society that forgets the family soon forgets respect, gratitude, sacrifice, and responsibility. When families are weak, individuals suffer; when families are strong, society flourishes.

The Church teaches very clearly that the family is not just a social institution—it is a spiritual reality.

The Second Vatican Council, in *Lumen Gentium*, says:

“The family is, so to speak, the domestic church” (LG 11).

And the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches:

“The Christian family constitutes a specific revelation and realization of ecclesial communion, and for this reason it can and should be called a domestic church” (CCC 2204).

Dear friends, this means that your home is meant to be a small church:

- where prayer is offered,
- where forgiveness is practised,
- where love is lived daily,
- where children first learn who God is—not from books, but from parents.

Before a child learns to say “Our Father” in church, he or she should experience a loving father at home.

St Thomas Aquinas wisely reminds us:

“Charity begins at home.”

This is very important today. Sometimes people are eager to help others outside—very active in parish groups, charities, and social causes—but they forget their own father, mother, spouse, or children at home.

True holiness is not measured only by what we do outside, but by how we love those closest to us.

If we cannot be patient at home, forgiving at home, respectful at home—then our charity outside becomes incomplete.

The Church teaches clearly and lovingly that the family is founded on marriage between one man and one woman, open to life.

The Catechism states:

“The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life, is by its nature ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring” (CCC 1601).

The Second Vatican Council, in *Gaudium et Spes*, affirms:

“The intimate partnership of married life and love has been established by the Creator and endowed by Him with its own proper laws” (GS 48).

Anything outside this plan does not come from God, because God Himself is the author of marriage and family life. This teaching is not about rejection or hatred—it is about fidelity to God’s design, which alone leads to true freedom and happiness.

The Holy Family was not perfect in worldly terms. They were poor. They were migrants. They faced danger and uncertainty.

In today’s Gospel from Matthew, we see the Holy Family fleeing to Egypt as refugees, trusting God in the midst of fear and instability.

What made them holy was not comfort—but obedience to God, mutual love, and trust.

St Paul, in the Letter to the Colossians, gives us a beautiful guide for family life:

“Put on compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience... forgive as the Lord has forgiven you... and let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts” (Col 3:12–15).

Dear families, holiness is lived:

- when husbands and wives forgive one another,
- when parents sacrifice quietly for their children,
- when children respect and obey their parents,
- when prayer becomes part of daily life.

Dear brothers and sisters, the Holy Family reminds us that every family—no matter how weak or wounded—can become holy if God is placed at the centre.

Let us pray today:

- for families struggling with division,
- for parents burdened with worry,
- for children searching for love and direction,
- for elderly parents who feel forgotten.

May Jesus, Mary, and Joseph teach us to love deeply, forgive generously, and trust God completely.

And may every Christian family truly become what the Church calls it to be:

a living, loving, praying Domestic Church.

Amen.