

The Domestic Church

If our family is a Christian family, then we can also say that our family is a 'domestic church', a community of faith, hope and love. The Trinity models for us what our own families should be like, communicating, giving, caring, loving. This begins for a human family at the marriage of a man and woman, who then give themselves in love to the other and produce a third member of the family, a child. The procreation and education of children reflects the Father's work of creation. The attentiveness to worshipping together as a family unit – saying prayers together at meals, attending mass together, even when other pressures get in the way – reflects the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross. The family is strengthened by this much as the Church is strengthened when we come together to do the same. Thank God for our families.

Prayers to Remember

Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to thee, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly thine, utterly dedicated unto thee; and then use us, we pray thee, as thou wilt, and always to thy glory and the welfare of thy people; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

A prayer for the new year, from the Book of Common Prayer of the Episcopal Church, 1978.

From the Fathers

'A God who was not only God, and a man who was not simply man, was born of woman. By being born he formed the gate of salvation from what had at one time been the way in for sin. Where in fact the serpent by exploiting human disobedience had infused his poison, there the Word entered through obedience and built a living temple. From the womb of a woman had come forth the original son of sin, Cain; and from the womb of a woman, without seed, there came into the light the Christ, the redeemer of the human race. Let us not be ashamed that he was born of a woman. That birth was for us the beginning of salvation.'

From 'Homily on the Mother of God', by Proclus of Constantinople (370-446, bishop, theologian)

27th December
2020

The Holy Family
(The First Sunday
of Christmas)

Family Life



When they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favour of God was upon him. (Luke 2.39,40)

Family life is sometimes complicated and often not straightforward. Over the Christmas period we spend more time together, and as well as joy and laughter, pleasure and delight there are negotiations to be made – who has control of the television remote control, and just how long are those relatives going to stay for! Today's celebration of the Holy Family is the reminder that in Jesus, Mary and Joseph God is given a home and a family. Just as all babies respond to the nurture, love and care that they receive so does this baby who is eternally God. As a child he is formed and develops through the influences that Mary and Joseph offer him – he needs them and the security they provide in order to grow. The Holy Family create a new family too, one in which we all belong. Jesus comes so that we can find our true home in God, and discover a deep solidarity as brothers and sisters. There's a lovely Christmas poem by G. K. Chesterton that ends by describing the manger in Bethlehem as "the place where God was homeless and all men are at home." How do you make others feel 'at home' in God's new family?

