

Fr. Romeo Evangelista Homily
Sunday, December 31, 2023
Holy Family
Cycle B

What is the most satisfying thing in life? A teacher once said, “The most satisfying thing in life is to see a child confidently walk down the road on his own, after you have shown him/her the right way to go.”

I remember the powerful Roman Empire into which Jesus was born. Who would have thought that this once mighty Empire would collapse and disappear? And what was the reason? There were political reasons, attacks from ferocious Germanic tribes. But what weakened the empire was the decline of family values and the spread of permissiveness.

The Church focuses on the Holy Family as our model every Christmas. The simple manger shows how God renounced everything we think important for life—except the family. The family is the source of life. When a society separates itself from its source, it dries up and leaves a riverbed full of mud and garbage, just like a river cut off from the sea.

God created humans in his image and likeness. God is a God in three persons—community of three. Therefore, He created humans as man and woman with a task that the two become three in their child. That makes a human family a picture of the Triune God.

In the Gospel, we do not find speeches on the family, but an event that is worth more than any word: God willed His Son to be born and to grow up in a human family. As today’s gospel passage shows, Jesus’ parents introduced Him as early as possible to the basis of their religion, and dedicated Him to God according to the law. The Gospel of Luke reveals the most authentic and profound vocation of the family: that of supporting each of its members, and discovering God and his plan for them.

The Holy Family is truly the “prototype” of every Christian family, called to carry out the vocation and mission of being a living cell in society and in the Church. If only all families would take the Holy Family as model, our future would surely be bright. May all of us pattern our lives, and families, after the Holy Family and so do the greatest apostolate possible—in and for the Kingdom of God.