

Fr. Romeo Evangelista Homily
Sunday, December 27, 2025
Holy Family
Cycle A

In the 1995 visit of St. Pope John Paul II to the Philippines during the world youth day, one of his strongest messages was for families: “Families, become who you are!”

Notice that he did not say what you are, but who you are. The family is not a what, it is a who. The family is not simply an anonymous collectivity but a community. The family is not so much a society but a sacrament. The communion in the family is a mirror on earth of the communion in the Trinity (CCC, no. 221).

When a man and a woman go together in marriage, they do not receive a sacrament. They become a sacrament. To say that the character of marriage and the family nowadays is undergoing radical attack is an understatement. In many countries in the world today, marriage is discouraged, demeaned, and even redefined.

Today is the Feast of the Holy Family. The liturgy continues to invite us to savor the mystery of the Incarnation, the Word becoming flesh. But more than that, our feast invites us to have a reverential awe for the fact that, in becoming flesh, Jesus lowered himself to be born into a family.

Without intending to be disrespectful, Jesus actually had no need of Mary, nor Joseph, nor of being in a family. He could have just occurred in his divine majesty without any human instrumentality. And yet, Jesus chose to be born and grow in a family. He became like us that he teaches how to live our humanity.

Society has no right to change the meaning of the family because the family is over and above society. It is not without reason that we call the family the basic unit of society. It is the family that creates society, not the other way around.

On this Feast of the Holy Family, we should remember that God respected the reality of the family by being born into one. So, it is also our mission to defend the dignity of every family. And at the center of that mission is Christ's presence in our families. I always believe in the saying that "The family that prays together stays together."

St. Mother Teresa once said, "if you wanted peace in our world, go home and love your families."