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**Feast of The Holy Family** December 31st 2023

**SUNDAY MASS TIMES**

 Saturday 6.00pm St. Patrick’s church

 Sunday 9.30am Christ the King church

 Sunday 11.00am St. Patrick’s church

**WEEKDAY LITURGY TIMES**

 Monday 10.00am St. Patrick’s (New Years Day)

 Tuesday 10.00am Christ the King

 Wednesday 10.00am St. Patrick’s

 Thursday 10.00am Christ the King

 Friday 10.00am St. Patrick’s

**MASS INTENTIONS RECEIVED**: Special Intention, Martin Donegan,

**ANNIVERSARIES: December 31st – January 6th:**

Tom Drummond, James Lapsley, Arthur Batey, Roy Rogers, Peter Clement, Samuel Butler, Mildred Smith, Cordelia Calder, Mark Anderson, Sheila Loveday Huggins, Frederick Middleton, Julia Elliott, Geraldine Cassidy, Patrick Duffy, Luke Williamson, David Frederick Harding, Henry Crossley, Eileen George, Fred Curtis, Maggie O' Donnell, Jim Machin, Joseph Brennan, Vincent Lawrence, James Duffy, Alice O' Neill, Peter McNamee, Joseph Mallon, Clifford Jordan, John Patrick McCallan.

**PLEASE REMEMBER** in your prayers all our sick and housebound brothers and sisters.

**The word this week**

Genesis 15:1–6; 21:1–3 The Lord’s promise to Abram and Sarah is fulfilled.

Psalm 104 ***He, the Lord is our God; he remembers his covenant for ever.’***

Hebrews 11:8, 11–12, 17–19 The faith of our ancestors.

Luke 2:22–40 The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom.

A

s an example for us to follow, the Holy Family can seem a little too perfect: when we consider the more “dramatic” events of the Christmas and Easter story, it can seem so far removed from us. And yet, as today’s Gospel reminds us there were also the so-called “hidden years” - the many years of family life in Nazareth, spent in ordinary things. During that time, we hear how Jesus grew and matured, and in the glimpse of that family life we see our example. The family is a basic unit of our Christian society, despite coming under threat nowadays. Our celebration of this feast, and the Word of God we proclaim, announces that there is a lasting value in the ideals of family life, and the relationship between husband, wife, parents and children. Whatever the changing details of each age, honour, understanding and love always remain the recipe for the perfect, and holy, human family. It is love that we put on over all the other clothes of changing cultures and places, to guarantee the life of the family in imitation of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

**AT MASS TODAY WE PRAY** Eucharistic Prayer 2 and Preface 2 for Christmas

One gift of this holy season is the time for families to gather around the table and share festive meals. As God’s family, we gather around this holy table to offer our prayer of endless praise and thanksgiving.

**PASTORAL LETTER** from Bishop Drainey to be read at all Masses this weekend on the Feast of The Holy Family.

**RECENTLY DECEASED:** Please remember in your prayers **Mrs. Majella Paula McConnell**, aged 65, from Thornaby who died recently. Her Funeral Mass will take place at Christ the King church on Thursday, January 11th, at 10.00am. May she rest in peace.

**ANY UNWANTED CHRISTMAS GIFTS** would be greatly accepted by St Patrick’s parish for future events. If anyone has any empty gift baskets they too would be appreciated. These can be given to Kath Hall or Carol Woodgate or left at church.

![[51+] Happy New Year With Flowers Wallpapers | WallpaperSafari.com]()![[51+] Happy New Year With Flowers Wallpapers | WallpaperSafari.com]()BLESSING FOR NEW YEAR

Every good gift comes from the Father of light.

May he grant you his grace and every blessing,

and keep you safe throughout the coming year. **AMEN.**

May he grant you unwavering faith,

constant hope, and love that endures to the end. **AMEN.**

May he order your days and work in his peace,

hear your every prayer,

and lead you to everlasting life and joy. **AMEN.**

**Feast of The Holy Family (B)**

**December 31st 2023**

 **First reading** Genesis 15:1-6,21:1-3

The word of the Lord was spoken to Abram in a vision, ‘Have no fear, Abram, I am your shield; your reward will be very great.’

 ‘My Lord,’ Abram replied ‘what do you intend to give me? I go childless…’. Then Abram said, ‘See, you have given me no descendants; some man of my household will be my heir.’ And then this word of the Lord was spoken to him, ‘He shall not be your heir; your heir shall be of your own flesh and blood.’ Then taking him outside he said, ‘Look up to heaven and count the stars if you can. Such will be your descendants’ he told him. Abram put his faith in the Lord, who counted this as making him justified.

 The Lord dealt kindly with Sarah as he had said, and did what he had promised. So Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the time God had promised. Abraham named the son born to him Isaac, the son to whom Sarah had given birth.

 **Second reading**  Hebrews 11:8,11-12,17-19

It was by faith that Abraham obeyed the call to set out for a country that was the inheritance given to him and his descendants, and that he set out without knowing where he was going. It was equally by faith that Sarah, in spite of being past the age, was made able to conceive, because she believed that he who had made the promise would be faithful to it. Because of this, there came from one man, and one who was already as good as dead himself, more descendants than could be counted, as many as the stars of heaven or the grains of sand on the seashore.

 It was by faith that Abraham, when put to the test, offered up Isaac. He offered to sacrifice his only son even though the promises had been made to him and he had been told: It is through Isaac that your name will be carried on. He was confident that God had the power even to raise the dead; and so, figuratively speaking, he was given back Isaac from the dead.

 **Gospel Acclamation**

Alleluia, alleluia!

At various times in the past and in various different ways,

God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets;

but in our own time, the last days, he has spoken to us through his Son.

Alleluia!

**Gospel Reading Luke 2:22-40**

When the day came for them to be purified as laid down by the Law of Moses, the parents of Jesus took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, – observing what stands written in the Law of the Lord: Every first-born male must be consecrated to the Lord – and also to offer in sacrifice, in accordance with what is said in the Law of the Lord, a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.

 Now in Jerusalem there was a man named Simeon. He was an upright and devout man; he looked forward to Israel’s comforting and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death until he had set eyes on the Christ of the Lord. Prompted by the Spirit he came to the Temple and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the Law required, he took him into his arms and blessed God; and he said:

‘Now, Master, you can let your servant go in peace,

just as you promised;

because my eyes have seen the salvation

which you have prepared for all the nations to see,

a light to enlighten the pagans

and the glory of your people Israel.’

As the child’s father and mother stood there wondering at the things that were being said about him, Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, ‘You see this child: he is destined for the fall and for the rising of many in Israel, destined to be a sign that is rejected – and a sword will pierce your own soul too – so that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare.’

 There was a prophetess also, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was well on in years. Her days of girlhood over, she had been married for seven years before becoming a widow. She was now eighty-four years old and never left the Temple, serving God night and day with fasting and prayer. She came by just at that moment and began to praise God; and she spoke of the child to all who looked forward to the deliverance of Jerusalem.

 When they had done everything the Law of the Lord required, they went back to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. Meanwhile the child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom; and God’s favour was with him.