

# Holy Family Sunday Homily

28 December 2025

How was your Christmas? Was it joyful and warm? Or was it a little flat, a little cold—because of how you were feeling?

We often expect Christmas, especially with family, to be picture-perfect. Like a family portrait: everyone present, smiling, well-dressed, looking happy—even if behind those smiles there are tensions, old wounds, or unspoken struggles.

Today we celebrate the Feast of the Holy Family. But what kind of family are we really celebrating? Did Jesus grow up in a perfect family?

The Gospel today tells us something quite different from what we might expect. This is not a picture-perfect family portrait. The Holy Family is on the run. An angel appears to Joseph in the middle of the night with terrible news: Herod wants the child dead. And so Mary, Joseph, and the baby Jesus flee in haste to Egypt—to a foreign land, unsure of what lies ahead. The Holy Family becomes, in many ways, a refugee family—fleeing danger, leaving home, and facing an uncertain future.

This Gospel shows us just how far God was willing to go to be close to us. When God chose to become human, He did not choose only the comfortable or beautiful parts of human life. He embraced the whole experience—fear, uncertainty, vulnerability, and danger. Scripture tells us that Jesus became “like us in all things but sin.” That means real human life, with all its messiness and fragility.

And then we look at the family God chose for His Son. From a human point of view, it was far from ideal. Joseph was not Jesus’ biological father. Mary’s pregnancy was surrounded by suspicion and whispers. Even later in Jesus’ life, people would say, “Isn’t this the son of Mary?”—a phrase that quietly questioned his identity and legitimacy. By modern standards, many would label this a “dysfunctional” family. And yet, the Gospel tells us that Jesus grew in wisdom, in strength, and in grace.

That should give us pause.

Because maybe today, God is asking us to look honestly at our own families. Family is deeply important—it shapes us more than we often realise. But there is no such thing as a perfect family. No family is without wounds, tensions, disappointments, or painful memories. If even the family of the Son of God was not perfect, how could we expect ours to be?

What matters is not that our families are perfect. That's impossible. What matters is that we choose to love—right there in the reality of our families, with all their shadows and scars. What matters is that we do our best to shape our families into places of mercy, patience, forgiveness, and care.

And that's not easy. Because family knows exactly how to push our buttons. Sometimes one word, one look, one memory is enough to trigger old reactions.

But the Holy Family reminds us of something important: you do not have to be perfect to be holy. Holiness grows in ordinary, imperfect homes—when people keep choosing love, even when it's hard.

So today, perhaps there is hope for our families. Hope for broken relationships. Hope for difficult conversations. Hope for healing that takes time.

God did not give up on the Holy Family. God does not give up on our families. And God does not give up on us. Amen.