##  St. Bonaventure Religious Ed

 **Remote Lesson 5**

 **Sunday December 27, 2020**

## The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

 The Fourth Commandment

**Preface to this week’s lesson:**

 Simeon and Anna are key figures to remind us that sometimes we must wait in order to witness God’s plans coming to fulfillment. However, it is always worth that wait, and rich blessings will come to those who trust and have faith in the Lord. We can joyfully hope in Jesus and trust that God’s plans will come to be.

How is this encounter with Simeon apply to us today?

* *First*, as a Christian, we must be reminded **Holy Spirit lives in me** ([Ephesians 1:13](http://www.youversion.com/bible/eph.1.niv84)), and just as Simeon was moved on that particular day to go into the Temple, we too ought to yield to the things which God speaks to us by Holy Spirit. When we do not listen to the Holy Spirit, we miss out on the tremendous plan God has in store for us.
* *Second*, **Jesus is God's plan of salvation**. When Simeon took Jesus into his arms he said, "my eyes have seen your salvation!"  God's plan of redemption was to send His Son to the cross to bear the penalty for our sin.  He is the way, the truth and the life and no one comes to the Father except through Him ([John 14:6](http://www.youversion.com/bible/john.14.niv84)). We must place our faith in Christ alone, not in ourselves or in some other human or some fabricated deity, but in Jesus alone.
* *Finally*, we ought to **lay our hearts before the Lord**. We ought to be genuine about who we are and what God is doing in our lives. We ought not puff ourselves up by the good things we do. We also ought not wallow in self-pity.  We must allow Jesus' Word to pierce our soul as it did Mary's (Luke 2:35; [Hebrews 4:12](http://www.youversion.com/bible/heb.4.niv84)).

 **Begin by praying the family prayer for today:**

O God, who were pleased to give us the shining example of the Holy Family,

 graciously grant that we may imitate them in practicing the virtues of family

 life and in the bonds of charity, and so, in the joy of your house, delight

one day in eternal rewards. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,

who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the

Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen

* **Read todays Gospel below as a family:**

Gospel [**LK 2:22-40**](https://bible.usccb.org/bible/luke/2?22)

When the days were completed for their purification
according to the law of Moses,
They took him up to Jerusalem
to present him to the Lord,
just as it is written in the law of the Lord,
*Every male that opens the womb shall be consecrated to the Lord,*
and to offer the sacrifice of
*a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons,*
in accordance with the dictate in the law of the Lord.

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon.
This man was righteous and devout,
awaiting the consolation of Israel,
and the Holy Spirit was upon him.
It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit
that he should not see death
before he had seen the Christ of the Lord.
He came in the Spirit into the temple;
and when the parents brought in the child Jesus
to perform the custom of the law in regard to him,
He took him into his arms and blessed God, saying:
“Now, Master, you may let your servant go
in peace, according to your word,
for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you prepared in sight of all the peoples,
a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and glory for your people Israel.”
The child’s father and mother were amazed at what was said about him;
and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother,
“Behold, this child is destined
for the fall and rise of many in Israel,
and to be a sign that will be contradicted
—and you yourself a sword will pierce—
so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”
There was also a prophetess, Anna,
the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher.
She was advanced in years,
having lived seven years with her husband after her marriage,
and then as a widow until she was eighty-four.
She never left the temple,
but worshiped night and day with fasting and prayer.
And coming forward at that very time,
she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child
to all who were awaiting the redemption of Jerusalem.

When they had fulfilled all the prescriptions
of the law of the Lord,
they returned to Galilee,
to their own town of Nazareth.
The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom;
and the favor of God was upon him.

* **Complete the lessons below as a family or individually, then share what you have learned.**
* **Each lesson, activity or video is geared to age levels.** *(RED - younger kids, BLUE – older elementary to HS, GREEN – adults or adult supervision to explain.)*

**An Adult Activity is not included this week because of the parent involvement required in the lesson for Middle School and High School.**

<https://vimeo.com/191202070> Story of Simeon and Anna for Elementary students (4 mins.) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bPtXucALoBE> Honor Thy Father and Mother (7 mins.)

**Lesson for Middle School and Confirmation students with parent involvement**:

**The topic for today is The Fifth Commandment:** Responsibilities and Gifts of Family Life. Parents discuss with their older kids:
• What unique contribution do you bring to your family?
• How do you show gratitude for the gift of your family?
• What are your favorite family events or gatherings?

Allow time for discussion.

The family is a gift from God. We honor God’s gift of family when we follow the Fifth Commandment to, “Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you”

**Read the Word of God from the** **Old Testament listen to find out how important it is to honor family members.**

# **Sirach 3:2-6 - Old Testament**

**2**For the Lord honors a father above his children,
    and he confirms a mother’s right over her children.
**3**Those who honor their father atone for sins,
**4**    and those who respect their mother are like those who lay up treasure.
**5**Those who honor their father will have joy in their own children,
    and when they pray they will be heard.
**6**Those who respect their father will have long life,
    and those who honor[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Sirach%203%3A2-6%2CSirach%203%3A12-14&version=NRSVCE#fen-NRSVCE-20212a)] their mother obey the Lord;

**Discussion Starters**
• How does the Lord want children to treat their parents?
• What will happen to persons who honor their father and mother?
• What kindness will not be forgotten?

**In today’s gospel today you listened to a story about Jesus’ family.**

• Where did Mary and Joseph take Jesus?
• Why was Jesus presented to the Lord?
• How did Jesus grow within his family?

**Scripture Background**
The Feast of the Holy Family highlights that Jesus was born into a family, which in turn reinforces Jesus’ humanity. This feast celebrates that through Jesus Christ, all human nature is sacred, including family life.

The first reading from the Old Testament [**SIR 3:2-6, 12-14**](https://bible.usccb.org/bible/sirach/3?2) focuses on God’s gift of family. Many scholars consider today’s passage to be a commentary on the Fourth Commandment, to honor one’s father and mother. The message is clear, God wants certain qualities to exist in family life—qualities such as care and kindness and holding mothers and fathers in a place of honor. Showing reverence and care for members within one’s family leads to many blessings from God.

Today’s gospel [**LK 2:22-40**](https://bible.usccb.org/bible/luke/2?22) shows Mary and Joseph’s obedience to God and their gratitude for God’s gift of family. Mary and Joseph follow the Jewish law of their time by presenting Jesus to the Lord in the Temple in Jerusalem. In the Temple, the Holy Family meets Simeon who proclaims Jesus to be the glory of Israel and Anna who predicts that Jesus will cause conflict and division within Israel. After the presentation in the Temple, Mary, Joseph and Jesus return home to Nazareth. In Nazareth Jesus continues to grow in wisdom within his loving family. This passage shows the grace of God given for all families.

**More Questions:**
• Why is family a gift from God?
• How can young people show respect for their parents?
• What does the Holy Family teach us about family life?

**Continue with a Family Activity for parents and Confirmation students: Letting Go**

In Luke's gospel, this narrative of the teen Jesus acted as a rite of passage. Jesus was no longer a boy, but a man, for he was instructing the Teachers of the Law in the Temple. He was beginning to fulfill his Father's will.

The hardest part of being a parent is letting go, allowing children to take responsibility and self-initiative. Sometimes they disappoint us. Sometimes they surprise us. On the New Year's Eve, take time to reflect your family's growth. Talk as a family how members have taken more "grown-up" decisions. Talk about the wisdom they have acquired. And talk about the coming year and what growth family members expect to make. End the discussion with a prayer for the family. (Don't forget to pray for the parents who need to let go.)