

## HAPPY FEAST of the HOLY FAMILY of JESUS, MARY, and JOSEPH

We celebrate this Sunday, on the last day of the Year 2023, after the **Solemn Feast of the Nativity of the Lord – Christmas the Feast of the Family of Jesus.**

In honoring, **Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, the Holy Family**, we also honor all families, big or small. And in honoring all families, we honor the family of God, the Church. But most especially, we focus in on the hidden, day-to-day life of the Holy Family of Nazareth.

Have you ever wondered what was it like to live day in and day out in the household of **St. Joseph**? What was it like to have **Jesus** for a son, **Mary** as a wife and mother, and **Joseph** as a father and a husband?

Their home would have certainly been a sacred place and a dwelling of true peace and unity. But it would have also been so much more.

The family home of **Jesus, Mary and Joseph** would have been, in numerous ways, just like any other home. They would have related together, talked, had fun, disagreed, worked, eaten, dealt with problems, and encountered everything else that makes up daily family life.

Of course, the virtues of **Jesus and Mary** were perfect, and **Joseph was a truly “just man.”** Therefore, the overriding characteristics of their home would have been love.

But with that said, **the Holy Family** would not have been exempt from daily toil-labor, hurt and challenges that face all families. For example, they experienced at firsthand personally the helplessness of what it is to be **homeless**.

Imagine what must have been going through in the mind and in the heart of Joseph as the husband and provider, at the most needful time of his wife, Mary, who was about to give birth, he was turned away and could not find a descent shelter in an inn. How desperate and fearful he must have felt, like so many homeless fathers and mothers would experience and feel as parents trying to find descent shelter their children on the cold or rainy nights?

Joseph and Mary had to settle for a humble shelter where the animals of labor were kept and that the Son of the most high would be born in a stable and be laid in a manger.

The **Holy Family** would also have encountered misunderstanding and gossip from others. Our Blessed Mother, for example, was found with a child out of wedlock, unknown to the world that her Son was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit. This would have been a topic of discussion among acquaintances and relatives for sure, in such a small town as Nazareth.

The **Holy Family of Jesus, Mary**, and Joseph would have had to fulfill all daily chores, earn a living, put food on the table, attend gatherings of family and friends and the like. They would have lived normal family life of every way, just like ours.

The Holy Family too like any families on earth would have encountered the death of loved ones. **Joseph the foster father of Jesus** died, prior to Jesus' public ministry. Though full of faith in eternal life they were not spared of the deep human emotions of heart wrenching sorrow we all experience at the death of our loved ones.

Truly all these are significant because it reveals God's love for family life, our ohana - family life. **God the Father** allowed His Divine Son Jesus to live this life on this earth like anyone would and, as a result, God elevated and sanctified ohana - family to a place within the Holy Trinity.

The holiness of the **Holy Family** reveals to us that every ohana - family is invited to share in God's divine

life and to encounter daily life with grace and virtue.

Let us take some time today - this week before the New Year 2024 ushers in, to reflect on the most basic and important unit we all belong to as Baptized Christians, our family unit, our ohana.

Some ohana - families are strong in virtue, some struggle with basic communications and even sin in their midst. Some are faithful day in and day out, some are broken and deeply wounded.

No matter the case, know that God wants to enter more deeply into our ohana - family life just as it is right now. God desires to give each ohana the strength and virtue to live as the Holy Family.

Be not fearful therefore as fathers and mothers the head of the household to surrender yourselves and to daily entrust your ohana – family to the protection of the Holy Family. Most of all as fathers and mothers as the head of the household you are bestowed the power, especially the fathers by God the Father to invoke blessings and protections for your own household – members, children and grandchildren who are under your roof (care).

You are given the authority as a father to called upon God in prayer, to invite and to invoke St. Michael and all the angels and saints. Pray to cast out evil, Satan and his minions who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls, especially your vulnerable children. **“Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.” 1 Peter 5: 8.**

Most of all be the father, like St. Joseph to be the **just man** and live your life in **obedience to God** so that you are the **source of blessings and protector the household** not the cause of evil and sufferings, (in the absence of the father, mother may take this role) and do the same.

The **Holy family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph** bless and protect all ohana - families, especially the ohana - families of St. Rita and all our loved ones!

The **Prayer for the Family** and the **Prayer for a Child’s Return to the Faith** can be found at the entrances to the church. You are welcome to take a copy of the prayers and pray them at home and let us seek the intercessions of the Holy Family for our ohana – families in these most challenging times for all families.

Most Fathers and mothers like any Catholic families have a child or children who have wandered away – from the Faith. Parents may pray the **A Prayer for a Child’s Return to the Faith**, to seek God’s graces for your child/children to return to the Faith.

### **SOLEMNITY of MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER of GOD**



The Solemn Feast of Mary, the Mother of God will be celebrated on **Monday, January 1<sup>st</sup> 2024 in our parish with; 7:30am Holy Rosary followed by the :00am Holy Mass on the Solemn Feast of Our Blessed Mother.**

Although it is not a Holy Day of Obligation in the Diocese of Honolulu, it is befitting to gather and celebrate this wonderful feast as we entrust our faith journey of the coming 2024 into the protective care of our Blessed Mother.

We will dedicate our parish and our ohana to Our Lord Jesus Christ truly present in Body, Soul and Divinity in the Holy Eucharist in adoration for the beginning of the **Year 2024** and to Our Blessed Mother, under the illustrious title of Mary the Mother of God for her maternal protection and care for our parish and ohana!

**OUR MAHALO NUI LOA to ALL WHO LABORED to PREPARED OUR PARISH for the SOLEMN FEAST of NATIVITY of OUR LORD – CHRISTMAS!**

I want to take this opportunity to extend our mahalo nui loa to all parishioners who labored to bring to

fruition such beautiful and prayerful **2023 Christmas Celebrations** this year.

Our interior (Church) **Christmas decorations** were prepared and beautifully set up this past Friday by Mele Ahuna, Brenda Levy, Charles & Gladys Peraro, the Domingo & Kalili Ohana. The **exterior of the church** has been continuously beautified by; Ivan & Okuda Ohana, Dough & Bob Wicks, Patrick Gomes & Sonny Keawe this past month.

Of course, **there are some who may have assisted with the Christmas preparations** but may have done so behind the scenes but to them we also extend our mahalo nui loa.

Though it may not seem to be a big deal, in the decorations, and preparations of the parish for Christmas, but in reality, it involves a lot of work, inside and outside. Also, the constant maintenance and upkeep of our parish may be a challenge, but many visitors and tourists enjoy and we locals-kamaina cherish.

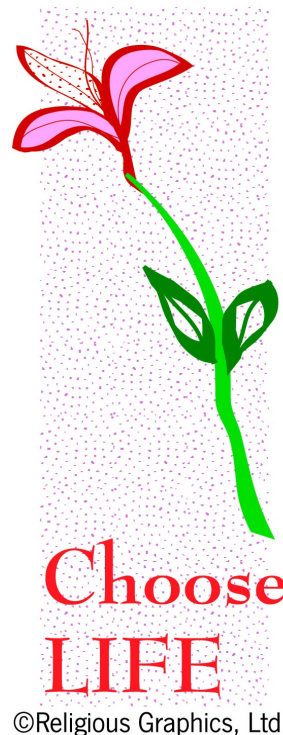
Mahalo to all our church **liturgical ministers at our Christmas Masses**; our **Deacon, Sacristans, Altar Servers, Lectors, and Choir**.

Mahalo Nui Loa for all your labor – Time, Talent, and Treasure. God bless you all!

Have a blessed Week in the Lord

Fr. Paulo ofm Cap.

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# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## PARISH CALENDAR

Sat, Dec 30	5:00 p.m. .... Mass
Sun, Dec 31	7:00 a.m. .... Mass
	9:00 a.m. .... Mass (Live Stream)
<b>Mon, Jan 1</b>	<b>5:00 p.m. .... NO Mass</b>
	<b>8:00 a.m. . . Mass -Mary the Mother of God</b>
	<b>..... PARISH OFFICE CLOSED</b>
	9:30-11 am ..... Food Pantry Closed
Tue, Jan 2	7:30 a.m. .... Liturgy of the Hours/Rosary
	8:00 a.m. .... Communion Service
	<b>..... PARISH OFFICE CLOSED</b>
Wed, Jan 3	7:30 a.m. .... Liturgy of the Hours/Rosary
	8:00 a.m. .... Communion Service
	9:30-11 am ..... Food Pantry Closed
Thur, Jan 4	7:30 a.m. .... Liturgy of the Hours/Rosary
	8:00 a.m. .... Communion Service
Fri, Jan 5	7:30 a.m. .... Liturgy of the Hours/Rosary
	8:00 a.m. .... Communion Service
Sat, Jan 6	7:30 a.m. .... Liturgy of the Hours/Rosary
	8:00 a.m. .... Communion Service
	3:15-4:00 p. m. .... Confession
	5:00 p.m. .... Mass

**WORD OF LIFE:** "Dearest St. Joseph. . . Help us to faithfully commit ourselves to the service and defense of human life—especially where it is vulnerable or threatened. Obtain for us the grace to do the will of God in all things." **USCCB, Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities A Prayer to St. Joseph, Defender of Life** ([www.respectlife.org/prayer-to-st-joseph](http://www.respectlife.org/prayer-to-st-joseph))

## WEEKLY READINGS

**Dec 31 Sun: The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph**

Gen:15:1-6, 21:1-3; Ps:105; Hb:11:8, 11-12, 17-19; Lk:2:22-40

**Jan 01 Mon: Mary, the Holy Mother of God**

Nm:6:22-27; Ps:67; Gal:4:4-7; Lk:2:16-21

**Jan 02 Tue: Saint Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops and Doctors of the Church**

1 Jn:2:22-28; Ps:98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4; Jn:1:19-28

**Jan 03 Wed: Christmas Weekday**

1 Jn:2:29-3:6; Ps:98:1, 3cd-4, 5-6; Jn:1:29-34

**Jan 04 Thur: Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, Religious**

1 Jn:3:7-10; Ps:98; 1, 7-8, 9; Jn:1:35-42

**Jan 05 Fri: Saint John Neumann, Bishop**

1 Jn:3:11-21; Ps:100: 1b-2, 3, 4, 5; Jn:1:43-51

**Jan 06 Sat: Christmas Weekday**

1 Jn:2:12-17; Ps:96:7-8a, 8b-9, 10; Lk:2:36-40

## NEXT SUNDAY READINGS:

**Is:60:1-6:** Darkness covers the earth, and heavy clouds hang over the people. But the light has come, and the glory of the Lord shines bright.

**Ep:3:2-3a, 5-6:** In Christ Jesus, Gentiles and Jews are co-heirs of the family fortune and co-shares in the saving promise.

**Mt:2:1-12:** The magi from the east followed the star until it stopped still over the house. They entered, found the child with Mary, prostrated themselves, and did him homage.

## NOTES ON STEWARDSHIP

When Jesus is presented in the Temple, our Blessed Mother formally offers him to God's service without reservation. It is a service the Simeon prophetically foretells: a service to God that will turn the old laws and cultural norms upside down. Are we destined to hold on to old habits and customs tightly, or like Jesus, are we willing to serve the Lord and proclaim the Gospel in new and creative ways?(**International Catholic Stewardship Council**)



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 Place the LORD at the  
 center of your families' lives

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# FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY



## Form Us in Love

Triune God,  
you entered humanity,  
were welcomed by humble parents  
and laid in a manger.  
On this feast of your human family,  
bless our families—received and chosen.  
Help us grow in love.  
Foster in us patience and kindness.  
Open our hearts to make room for you  
and guide us on our path to holiness.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

**Sunday, December 31, 2023**  
**Bless Family Life**



*Today's readings: Genesis 15:1–6; 21:1–3; or Sirach 3:2–6, 12–14; Psalm 105:1–2, 3–4, 5–6, 8–9; or Psalm 128:1–2, 3, 4–5; Hebrews 11:8, 11–12, 17–19; or Colossians 3:12–21; Luke 2:22–40.* On the Feast of the Holy Family, the Church honors Jesus' earthly family, offering encouragement and a model to all families. By sending Jesus to enter the world through a human family, God takes on all the messiness that comes with family life. God shows us tangibly that God desires to be close to us in our everyday living, in our closest relationships, and in the life in our homes. Families are called the hearth of the domestic church because it is within our families that we are first formed in faith and nurtured in love. In both the trials and joys of family life, we learn how to strive for holiness.

Today marks the exact midpoint in the Christmas season. We continue to recall what befell the holy family as they welcomed the infant Jesus during their stay in overcrowded Bethlehem; they were visited by the most unexpected guests and went to great extremes to protect their newborn child.

The Feast of the Holy Family offers us an opportunity to reflect upon the holiness in our primary relationships. Today's second reading from the Letter to the Colossians gives us a blueprint for household living. Read it with loved ones and together prayerfully discern some resolutions for the new year.





## THIS WEEK AT HOME

### Monday, January 1

#### Mary, Holy Mother of God

According to the Scriptures, Mary reflects in her heart on all the amazing events surrounding the birth of her child. As we move from one calendar year to the next, we are invited to reflect with gratitude on the gifts given to us as well as look forward to the new year with hope, faith, and trust in the abiding presence of Emmanuel. This time of the year, when traditionally New Year's resolutions are made, is also the perfect time to make spiritual promises. Ponder how you hope to grow in your relationship with the living Christ in the coming year. *Today's readings: Numbers 6:22–27; Psalm 67:2–3, 5, 6, 8; Galatians 4:4–7; Luke 2:16–21.*

### Tuesday, January 2

#### Sts. Basil and Gregory

St. Basil the Great and St. Gregory Nazianzen were fourth-century contemporaries, both born to parents who were named saints and both blessed with siblings who became saints. Through their writings, they made important contributions to how the Church understands the mystery of the Trinity. Their articulation of Jesus as fully human and fully divine shaped the language of the Nicene Creed we profess every Sunday at Mass. *Today's readings: 1 John 2:22–28; Psalm 98:1, 2–3ab, 3cd–4; John 1:19–28.*

### Wednesday, January 3

#### The Most Holy Name of Jesus

The Church reserves today as an optional memorial dedicated to the Most Holy Name of Jesus. The name Jesus, (in Hebrew, *Yeshua*) means “Savior.” St. Paul urges all Christians to keep holy the name of Jesus, “*That at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth*” (Philippians 2:10). *Today's optional memorial readings: Philippians 2:1–11; Psalm 8:4–9; Luke 2:21–22.*

### Thursday, January 4

#### St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

Born in 1774, Elizabeth Ann (Bayley) Seton was by the age of twenty-nine a widowed mother of five children. In her grief she discovered the Catholic faith and received the call to form a new religious order. In starting her first Catholic school for poor girls, Elizabeth founded the Catholic parochial school system that still thrives today. Elizabeth was canonized in 1975 as the first person born in the United States to be named a saint. Today the Sisters of Charity serve in communities around the world following the inspiration of their founder, Mother Seton. *Today's readings: 1 John 3:7–10; Psalm 98:1, 7–8, 9; John 1:35–42.*

### Friday, January 5

#### St. John Neumann

Born in 1811, John Neumann emigrated from Bohemia to New York to care for the spiritual needs of European immigrants. As a young priest he entered the Redemptorists and was subsequently named the bishop of Philadelphia. In just seven years, he built eighty-nine Catholic churches, hospitals, orphanages, and almost one hundred schools. He organized the first diocesan Catholic school system in the United States and is remembered to this day as the patron of sick children and immigrants. *Today's readings: 1 John 3:11–21; Psalm 100:1b–2, 3, 4, 5; John 1:43–51.*

### Saturday, January 6

#### The Twelfth Day of Christmas

The liturgical season of Christmas begins with the vigil of Christmas and concludes on Monday, January 8, with the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. Throughout the season we celebrate the birth of Christ into our hearts, our lives and our world, and commemorate that Jesus comes to save us and lead us to eternal light. Listen to the Christmas carol “The Twelve Days of Christmas,” originally written to convey the essential elements of the Christian faith during centuries of religious persecution. *Today's readings: 1 John 5:5–13; Psalm 147:12–13, 14–15, 19–20; Mark 1:7–11.*

