

## Reflection Questions

- What brings you hope this Christmas?
- How have you become more reliable, predictable, and consistent by participating in recovery?
- How has the season of Advent prepared you to welcome Jesus Christ this Christmas?

### Merry Christmas!

*May God bless you and those you love as we celebrate the coming of Jesus Christ into the world.*

If you need support this Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, CIR members will be available around the clock to speak with you. Connect day or night via phone or Zoom:

(669) 900-6833

Zoom Meeting ID: 914 1234 2605 / Passcode: 121212

### Sunday Mass Readings This Week

**1st Reading:** Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 128:1-2, 3, 4-5

**2nd Reading:** Colossians 3:12-21

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

## Christmas/Holy Family



We rejoice together in the coming of our Lord at Christmas and the hope of a new year ahead of us. This season of the year carries hope and anticipation for something new. This was the experience of Mary and Joseph as they sought a home for their newborn child. By knowing the family of Jesus, we can learn to love, serve, and understand our own family.

In the readings leading up to Christmas, we are given a chance to reflect upon Mary and Joseph's willingness and humility — two important components of recovery. Mary's "yes" paved the way for Christ's entry into our world, revealing God's ultimate love for us and salvation from bondage. Joseph set aside his pride and cared for Mary throughout the start of their marriage, even though there were plenty of uncertainties.

The Gospel Reading for the Feast of the Holy Family, which we celebrate this Sunday, details the patience, and trust of both Joseph and Mary. It was needed to withstand the early stages of their family's journey:

*Joseph rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed for Egypt.  
He stayed there until the death of Herod,  
that what the Lord had said through the prophet  
might be fulfilled,  
Out of Egypt I called my son.  
When Herod had died, behold,  
the angel of the Lord appeared in a dream  
to Joseph in Egypt and said,  
"Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the  
land of Israel,  
for those who sought the child's life are dead."  
He rose, took the child and his mother,  
and went to the land of Israel.*

Joseph is consistent and reliable, leading the way for his family and providing their protection. Mary takes on the role of nurturing Mother for her newborn son and for the world. The Lord did not march into the world in a display of power and might, but was instead welcomed into the world by the grace of a humble woman. "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word," Mary said.

Gathering in fellowship provides us a special opportunity to learn from the experience, strength, and hope of each other. The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph found similar support from those who sent messages from God as they began their spiritual journey together.

Let us each show the same willingness to reflect on the magnificence of the Lord this Christmas Season. The love and mercy we receive from Him ought to be shared with the world. We can be guided by the Holy Family while remembering the words of Saint Paul in this Sunday's Second Reading:

*Brothers and sisters:  
Put on, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved,  
heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility,  
gentleness, and patience,  
bearing with one another and forgiving one  
another,  
if one has a grievance against another;  
as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do.  
And over all these put on love,  
that is, the bond of perfection.  
And let the peace of Christ control your hearts,  
the peace into which you  
were also called in one body.  
And be thankful.  
Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly,  
as in all wisdom you teach  
and admonish one another,  
singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs  
with gratitude in your hearts to God.  
And whatever you do, in word or in deed,  
do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving  
thanks to God the Father through him.*