

## FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY &amp; JOSEPH

We rejoice together in the coming of our Lord at Christmas and the hopeful beginning of a new year. This season invites us to pause, breathe, and recognize the ways God has entered our lives—quietly, faithfully, and often unexpectedly. It is also a time when many of us reflect on our recovery journey and the new spiritual family God has given us through grace, fellowship, and the Twelve Steps.

In the days surrounding Christmas, the Church invites us to contemplate the humility and willingness of Mary and Joseph. These virtues are essential not only to the Holy Family but also to recovery. Mary’s “yes” opened the way for Christ’s presence in the world. Joseph’s courage and surrender allowed him to protect and guide the fragile new life entrusted to him. Their trust in God reassures us that new beginnings often arrive in simple, hidden ways.

This Sunday’s second reading offers a beautiful path for those seeking renewal of mind and heart (Colossians 3:12-17):

*Put on then, 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 heart the peace into which you were also called in one body. And be thankful.*

These virtues echo the spiritual principles we encounter in recovery. Compassion grows as we give up old judgments. Humility strengthens us as we admit our need for God. Patience develops as we practice surrender. Forgiveness becomes possible as resentments lose their power.

And ultimately, love becomes the guiding force of our interactions—the fruit of spiritual awakening.

The gospel reading for the Feast of the Holy Family highlights Joseph’s trust, vigilance, and obedience in difficult circumstances (Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23):

*When the magi had departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. Herod is going to search for the child to destroy him.” Joseph rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed for Egypt... When Herod had died, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream 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 responds with immediacy and faith. He does not hesitate or demand clarity. He listens, trusts, and takes the next right step—qualities deeply familiar to people in recovery. Many of us recall times when we felt uprooted, afraid, or uncertain. Like Joseph, we were called to follow God’s direction even when the way forward felt unclear.

Mary and Joseph relied on God’s guidance and the help of the spiritual messengers He sent. Our own journeys reflect this pattern. Sponsors, friends in recovery, Scripture, the sacraments, and the fellowship itself become “angels” that guide, encourage, and protect us as we grow in freedom.

As we celebrate Christmas and the feast of the Holy Family, we reflect on what it means to be chosen, beloved, forgiven, and renewed. Christ is born not in perfect

conditions but in humble surroundings. Likewise, Christ enters the humble places of our lives—our wounds, our histories, our recovery struggles—and brings light, peace, and purpose.

The Holy Family teaches us that God can form something beautiful from uncertain beginnings. As we stand at the threshold of a new year, may we ask for the courage of Joseph, the humility of Mary, and the presence of Jesus to shape us more fully. With gratitude, we commit ourselves again to the path of transformation and service.

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What attitudes or behaviors from Colossians are you being invited to “put on” this Christmas season?
- In what ways does Joseph’s trust inspire your own recovery journey?
- How are you committed to grow in compassion, patience, or humility in the coming year?

## MASS READINGS

**FIRST READING** Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM** Psalm 128:1-2, 3, 4-5

**SECOND READING** Colossians 3:12-21 or 3:12-17

**GOSPEL** Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23