Holy Family 2023

MDP of God

Just a few days ago we celebrated the glorious birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

Even though He was born in humble circumstances---being born in a stable surrounded by animals doesn’t sound real glorious

But it was glorious in that ---Jesus was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit

When He was born the angel proclaimed the good news to the shepherds---a choir of angels sang of His glory

Eventually the Magi would come from afar to adore Him

So that first Christmas was a time of incredible glory---as earth and heaven were united—as the Creator of the world humbled Himself to become one of us---as the light of heaven overcame the darkness of earth

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*And God changed everything---*we need to remember that when Jesus was born *-- shepherds were seen as the lowest of the low in Israeli culture*—they were the bottom of the barrel when it came to social standing---*yet the all-powerful Creator of heaven and earth chose* ***to allow them*** *to be the first to hear the good news of the birth of the Savior*---**Why?**

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Because Jesus wanted to emphasize one of the most profound truths of creation—that is that every human being is made in the image and likeness of God---every human being has incredible dignity because of that [social standing-job-doesn’t matter]

And now today---on the Feast of the Holy Family--- we have the opportunity to reflect on God’s original plan in creating us---*and that’s the plan of the human family*

We should ponder---why is it that the fundamental unit in just about every culture has been the family?—*It’s because the human family is supposed to point us to God Himself---*God is a life giving community of love F-S-HS

The human family is supposed to be a life-giving community of love

But we see at the time of the Fall—and then throughout the bible how sin marred what the family was supposed to be

So Adam was supposed to guard the Garden and protect His bride---but Adam failed to protect His bride

Then when God confronts Adam about his sin---*he again doesn’t protect his bride-*--**he could have fallen on his knees and said,** “God it’s all my fault—I failed to protect the Garden—I failed to protect my bride---Punish me, not her Lord. I let her down, I let you down, please forgive us”

*But that’s not what Adam did*---**instead he throws her under the bus**---when God confronts him about sin--- Adam says, “The woman”---“The woman you put here God---it’s her fault –it’s your fault---God it’s not my fault”

So instead of that first family being the community of love God made it to be---it becomes a group of people who blame each other—who fail to protect each other---where everybody seeks their own interest even to the point of hurting others

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We see that in the story of Cain and Abel—two brothers---and of course in God’s plan brothers are supposed to love each other---because the family is meant to be a community of love

But in Cain and Abel---*we see Cain* ***envy*** *his brothers relationship with the Lord*—to the point he commits violence against him and kills his brother

So again—the family instead of being the community of life giving love that God intends it to be---we see in the family—selfishness and hatred and **life taking** violence

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Now this is a little side issue here---but this lays the groundwork of how God chooses to save us

So Adam and Eve sin at a tree---so Jesus in saving us is “hung on a tree”{point}

Adam fails to protect his bride-- and then blames her after the Fall---so Jesus who is the new Adam---He does protect His bride the Church---in fact He lays down His life for His bride---He takes the rightful punishment of all of us who comprise the Church—the bride of Christ---and He takes our punishment on Himself

And again—the family is supposed to be a community of life giving love---so Jesus in loving His bride the Church—*and it’s in His bride the Church that we are born to new life*---the baptismal font is the womb of Holy Mother the Church---where Jesus’ love for His Bride allows us to come to a new birth into the family of God

Which then makes us brothers and sisters to each other—and we are called to love our brothers and sisters—[look around at the people around you—your called to love—even cut you off in parking lot—don’t like what they’re wearing]even though they’re not perfect—even though our brothers and sisters make mistakes---sometimes really big mistakes---they might cut us off in the parking lot---**whatever**

But anyway—we’re supposed to love our brothers in sisters in Christ

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Now getting back to the main point of this homily

So Jesus when He came into the world to save us---the first thing He does is sanctify the human family

He’s born into a family--- *for the first 30 of His 33 years in this world*---**He lived in a family**

Working with Joseph—being obedient to His Mother and foster father---*He sanctified the family*

Jesus, Mary, and Joseph lived as a community of love

When Jesus was first conceived in this world by the power of the Holy Spirit—Joseph at first was going to quietly divorce Mary

But when the angel appeared to Joseph in a dream---Joseph stepped up to the plate and took Mary into his home as his bride---*he could have rejected Mary*—he could have said “I want nothing to do with her---but he responded to Mary with love---*and his love protected her*—**and protected Jesus**

Had Joseph chosen too—he could have had Mary stoned to death

---*but Joseph chose to love her and her Son*

Now contrast that with the first family of Adam and Eve—Cain and Abel

Joseph protects his bride where Adam failed miserably to protect his

Joseph’s love keeps His family safe---Adam’s failure to protect his bride and then blaming her—brings destruction on his family—and *we see that manifested in a horrible way in the lives of Cain and Abel*

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So we see in the Holy Family—the family once more becoming what God made it to be—a community of life-giving love

When Jesus comes to the world to save us—the 1st thing He does is sanctify the family---because the family is at the center of God’s plan for human life

Even in saving us---He uses the model of the family---where we’re born again into His family—where we are made brothers and sisters in the Body of Christ---where we are called to love our brothers and sisters in Christ---where we’re called to worship together—pray together—build each other up—help each other—be concerned for one another

My friends—when sin came into the world—the first casualty was the family

We see so much brokenness in families today

So many of our societal ills have to do with the destruction of the family

Violence—crime—despair—hopelessness drug abuse---it’s all tied to the breakdown of the family—the looting going on in so many of our major citiess-so many of those problems are at their worse where there are very few dads involved in raising their kids---so much of the destruction of our society is tied to the destruction of the family—to ignore God’s plan of the family is so destructive of us as individuals—*and so destructive of our entire culture*

God’s plan is a family plan—it’s so destructive when we ignore His family plan is destroying our culture--

It’s important that we look at our lives and we ask, “am I loving my family as God calls me to love my family?

Husbands and wives—are you loving each other as God wants you to love one another?

Too often husbands and wives get into power struggles and it hurts their whole family

Too often husbands and wives refuse to forgive each other—they hold grudges---and it hurts their whole family---because instead of the kids being surrounded and protected by the love of the parents---they end up not having that bubble of lovesurrounding them, protecting them

Folks—if you’re in a power struggle with your spouse---**knock it off**—*that’s not what God calls you to do! If you’re holding on to past hurts---let them go!*

We can’t love if we refuse to forgive---because folks we’re all human—we hurt each other---if we refuse to forgive we’ll never have the relationship of love God wants us to have with others

Parents and kids—God calls you to love each other in that parent child relationship

Folks—sometimes parents want to be their kid’s friends instead of their parents---*parents, your kids are going to have a lot of friends through their lives-*--**they need you to be their parents**—Parents discipline their kids---with love of course---but they need discipline.

The bible says that when a parent doesn’t discipline their kids—*that they hate their kids*---those are strong words—Why?

Because without discipline kids become monsters— there’s a lot of monsters out their---they have a fallen human nature—and without loving discipline they’ll be out of control---they won’t become the people of love God calls them to be---parents—**be parents to your kids**

Love them enough to discipline them

Kids—love your parents---are your parents perfect? Of course not—they’re human---*but love them*—treat them with respect---we see that with Jesus—He allowed the intercession of Mary be what leads to His 1st miracle---He was an adult—He could have worked His first miracle any time---but He chose to do it at the intercession of His Mom—Why? Because He wanted to shower glory upon His mother

That’s what God calls children to do—heap honor on their parents

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Brothers and sisters—love your brothers and sisters

When I was growing up—my two brothers were a lot like Cain and Abel---*now they both survived*---**but they were pretty mean to each other**

It’s difficult for brothers and sisters to love each other---if they’re going to –they need to forgive each other—because again we’re humans—we hurt each other---that’s why we need to forgive--- *Because God wants your family to become a community of love*

Folks—we need to get over our pettiness--sometimes we don’t feel like forgiving—we don’t feel like loving—*but you need to get over yourself*---you need to do that if you’re to become the person God made you to be—God made you to be a person of love

[Love bros and sis in Christ---God wants you to love your bros and sis

[people hurt by church---doesn’t change His plan

[love your family—love God’s family—in that way we can become what God made us to be]