



Archdiocese of San Antonio

Most Reverend Gustavo Garcia-Siller



Feast of the Holy Family

December 27, 2015

This Christmas Season helps us to understand what it means that God became man. It is an amazing thing that God did. It has a profound meaning that he took on our humanity, our flesh. It shows us that God truly understands the struggles of human life. It shows that God and us humans are once again completely united in the person of Jesus Christ, who is God and man. These are wonderful mysteries that communicate the glory and beauty of God and of our salvation. But this feastday today is one that asks us, “What does it mean that Jesus was born into a family?”

The Son could have become man in any number of ways. He could have just come to earth and created an adult body for himself. He could have entered the being of another human that was already walking the earth. But none of these things happened. Our Church teaches that he was truly conceived as a new human – body, mind, and soul – in the womb of the Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy

Spirit. He was truly born to Mary and her husband Joseph. He was born as a child of a family. What does this mean?

It means that God chose to communicate his love, not just through the Incarnation, but through the family. The family has a special significance to the human race, and it is so powerful that it is able to communicate the saving love of God himself.

When Pope Francis visited the United States and spoke to the people gathered at the Festival of the Family in Philadelphia, he said: “The family has a divine identity card. Do you see what I mean? God gave the family an identity card, so that families could be places in our world where his truth, love and beauty could continue to take root and grow.” What beautiful words from our Pope! This is how we reflect on what the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph can teach us as we live out our faith in our own families.

Husbands and wives are to love each other just like Jesus loved the Church. Pope Francis would also say this later in his words in Philadelphia: “Jesus was not a confirmed bachelor, far from it! He took the Church as his bride, and made her a people of his own. He laid down his life for those he loved, so that his bride, the Church, could always know that he is God with us, his people, his family. We cannot understand Christ without his Church, just as we cannot understand the Church without her spouse, Christ Jesus, who gave his

life out of love, and who makes us see that it is worth the price.”

Husbands and wives, dare to love each other like Jesus and the Church love each other. Whatever is standing in your way, let it go! If you need help to move past something, get the help you need. Ask your priests, go to counselors, call Catholic Charities or St. Mary’s University and ask them for counseling help. Do not let anything stand between your love as husbands and wives, it is a gift beyond counting. It is a gift for you as spouses, but also it is a gift for the Church which is enriched by your love.

You children also have a role in the family. Jesus was a child for half of his life. He was a little baby, he was a young child, and he was a teenager! You little ones, you teenagers, and you who are just now becoming adults, you have a role in your family. Take your role seriously. Love your parents and learn from them. We show our parents respect because God commands us to do so and because we love them. But God made that commandment because we need to learn from our parents. They will help you as you live a good Christian life with your friends at school and at work, with your cousins, and even with your brothers and sisters in the house. Let God make your family holy! A holy family shines God’s light to the world!

My friends, the family has many challenges today, but this is the Year of Mercy. No matter what has happened in the past, let God’s

mercy heal your families. Open your hearts and do not be stubborn. Love each other, be subordinate to each other, and follow the will of our God. The Lord God came into this world through a family, do not forget what that means for your own families.

May Mary and Joseph intercede for us as we remember the family they built through their love for our God. Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, make our families strong so that they can bring light to the world and make known the glory of God.

Pope Francis quotes in Spanish:

First: “La familia tiene carta de ciudadanía divina. ¿Está claro? La carta de ciudadanía que tiene la familia se la dio Dios, para que en su seno creciera cada vez más la verdad, el amor y la belleza.”

Second: “Jesús no fue un ‘solterón’, todo lo contrario. Él ha desposado a la Iglesia, la ha hecho su pueblo. Él se jugó la vida por los que amando todo de sí, para que su esposa, la Iglesia, pudiera siempre experimentar que Él es el Dios con nosotros, con su pueblo, su familia. No podemos comprender a Cristo sin su Iglesia, como no podemos comprender la Iglesia sin su esposo, Cristo Jesús, quien se entregó por amor y nos mostró que vale la pena hacerlo.”