



Living the Faith

Success is in God's Hands, Not Ours Alone



In this scene, the Virgin Mary and her mother, Anne, hold the Christ Child, with Mary's husband, Joseph, and her father, Joachim, looking on in the background.

"Each Christian family can first of all—as Mary and Joseph did—welcome Jesus, listen to Him, speak with Him, guard Him, protect Him, grow with Him; and in this way improve the world."

—Pope Francis, General Audience,
December 17, 2014



Christmas celebrates the fruit of Mary and Joseph's trust in God. The long-awaited Messiah, sent to save us from our sins and win back the eternal blessedness lost by Adam's sin, is born. The Son of God is like us in all things but sin. We learn from the Incarnation that our success is in God's hands. Without the Father's love, we would be lost for all eternity. Mary and Joseph sacrificed greatly to make the arduous journey to Bethlehem, to obey God's directive to flee into Egypt, and to go to Nazareth to raise Jesus. Ambiguity, uncertainty, and brokenness touched the Holy Family. Their lives teach us that we cannot understand God's designs.

This wonderful lesson urges parents to put their families in God's hands and trust that their efforts will bear fruit. Faithful parents are examples for us, whether single or married. We, too, are to put ourselves in God's hands. In so doing, God's grace helps us realize better the depths of who we are and what we are called to become.

Questions for Reflection:

The wisdom of the Christmas story invites us to ask the following questions:

- *How can we imitate the Holy Family during difficult times, such as job loss, sickness, times of doubt, and death?*
- *In what ways does Jesus's coming at Christmas help us appreciate our need to put our lives in God's hands?*

Let us pray, asking the Holy Spirit to give us the courage in difficult times to imitate the Holy Family.