

Session Two

When Everything Changes, the Lord Remains

How is a family to respond to the changing and challenging realities of life? In this session, as we continue to read in Scripture, Mary and Joseph will teach us that when the unexpected happens, the Lord faithfully provides and remains by our side, always.

Let's Read Scripture

On *The Heart of the Family's* website, play Video One and Video Two.

Matthew 2:1-12

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage."

When King Herod heard this, he was greatly troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

Assembling all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born.

They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it has been written through the prophet:

'And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah,

are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;

since from you shall come a ruler,

who is to shepherd my people Israel."

Then Herod called the magi secretly and ascertained from them the time of the star's appearance. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search diligently for the child. When you have found him, bring me word that I too may go and do him homage."

After their audience with the king they set out. And behold, the star that they had seen at its rising preceded them, until it came and stopped over the place where the child was.

They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary, his mother.

They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed for their country by another way.

Matthew 2:13-23

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. He stayed there until the death of Herod...

When Herod realized that he had been deceived by the magi, he became furious. He ordered the massacre of all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had ascertained from the magi...

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. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go back there. And because he had been warned in a dream, he departed for the region of Galilee. He went and dwelt in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, “He shall be called a Nazorean.”

Let's Reflect

After you play the second video, invite each family member to take a moment to think about their responses to these reflection questions. When everyone is ready, share your responses with each other.

- We spoke about how no matter what happens in our life, the Lord remains with us, and the Lord provides. Think about a difficult moment that happened or is happening at school, work, or home, and share with others: in what ways do you recognize God’s presence walking you?
- The Magi came to the Holy Family with precious gifts for baby Jesus. What gifts do you have that you would like to offer to your family? Think about even small details and gestures, like a smile or a hug. Also think about quality time that you can spend with them, or even chores and tasks that you can do for them.

Let's Pray

After you share your responses, play Video Three of this session and pray along as a family. If it is safe, light a candle and have your family surround it. This candle reminds us of the star that illuminated the journey of the Magi towards Christ, the heart of our family. Our priest will start each sentence, while you and your family repeat out loud the bold words.

Dear Lord,

Like the Holy Spouses, Mary and Joseph, on their way to Egypt, we journey through the world seeking safety and refuge of anything that can hurt and wound those we love. Like them, let us invite and embrace the presence of Jesus that we may walk with him through all the changes in our life.

Whenever we embark on a new journey...**be our companion.**

Whenever we are uncertain of the next step that we must take...**be our guide.**

Whenever we are tired or feel like we can't keep going...**be our strength.**

Whenever we feel lonely or unloved...**be our refuge.**

Whenever we struggle to love one another...**be our example.**

Every day, every night, every season, and every moment...**be the one whom we love, the center of our family story.**

Holy Family of Nazareth,

Pray for us.

Let's Act

Share a family story. Go through your family album or around the house and find a picture of the favorite gift you've ever received. Even if you don't have a picture or object to pass around, just share the story of the favorite gift you've ever received with as many details as you can. When everyone has found a picture, or object, or maybe just the memory of that gift, gather around, and share that story. Remember to ask, very respectfully, questions about the stories you hear.

Pray to your guardian angel. As we heard in the stories of these two sessions, angels came to Mary and Joseph to communicate God's divine plan for them. As Catholics, we believe that God has sent an angel to watch over us and to intercede for us every moment of our life. Make an effort to memorize these short prayers, so that when you gather in the family prayer space that you built, you can also pray to your guardian angel and to St. Michael the Archangel.

Prayer to Your Guardian Angel

Angel of God, my guardian dear,
to whom God's love commits me here,
ever this day be at my side,
to light and guard, to rule and guide.

Amen.

Prayer to St. Michael

St. Michael the Archangel,
defend us in battle.
Be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the Devil.
May God rebuke him, we humbly pray,
and do thou,
O Prince of the heavenly hosts,
by the power of God,
thrust into hell Satan,
and all the evil spirits,
who prowl about the world
seeking the ruin of souls.

Amen.