

Prayer for the Feast of the Holy Family

**Dear Lord, bless our family. Be so kind as to give us the unity, peace, and mutual love that You found in Your own family in the little town of Nazareth.*

Saint Joseph, bless the head of our family. Obtain for him the strength, the wisdom, and the prudence he needs to support and direct those under his care.

Mother Mary, bless the mother of our family. Help her to be pure and kind, gentle and self-sacrificing. For the more she resembles you, the better will our family be.

Lord Jesus, bless the children of our family. Help them to be obedient and devoted to their parents. Make them more and more like You. Let them grow, as You did, in wisdom and age and grace before God and man.

Holy Family of Nazareth, make our family and home more and more like Yours, until we are all one family, happy and at peace in our true home with You. Amen.

**(excerpted from: www.catholic-forum.com)*

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***Oh, how this feast day is loved by many! It reminds us that Jesus came to us from *within a family*, as the ultimate good of *Mary and Joseph's marriage*. With them, He formed a union of divine and human hearts, and established an earthly trinity to help us better comprehend the mystery of the heavenly Trinity.*

*And He gave us not just a means of contemplating the heavenly Trinity, but a living example for us all—from the very start of His life on earth, He gave us a family in which “all men might behold a perfect model of domestic life, and of all virtue and holiness.” (Pope Leo XIII) “*God wanted to be born and to grow up in a human family*. In this way he consecrated the family as the first and ordinary means of his encounter with humanity.” (Pope Benedict XVI)*

What a gift! What a wonderful source of inspiration to meditate upon.

****(excerpted from: www.franciscanfocus.com)*



Novena to The Holy Family

MOVEABLE FEAST DAY



This painting, shows the Holy family and the Trinity; God the Father, the Holy Spirit and Christ (vertical).

This painting, made by a private church 1726, Amsterdam

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

NOVENA TO THE HOLY FAMILY

***NOVENA PRAYER: THIS IS SAID FOR NINE DAYS BEFORE THE FEAST DAY**

Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, bless me and grant me the grace of loving Holy Church as I should, above every earthly thing, and of ever showing my love by deeds.

Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, bless me and grant me the grace of openly professing as I should, with courage and without human respect, the faith that I received as your gift in holy baptism.

Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, bless me and grant me the grace of sharing as I should in the defense and propagation of the Faith when duty calls, whether by word or by the sacrifice of my possessions and my life.

Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, bless me and grant me the grace of loving my family and others in mutual charity as I should, and establish us in perfect harmony of thought, will, and action, under the rule and guidance of the shepherds of the Church.

Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, bless me and grant me the grace of conforming my life fully as I should to the commandments of God's law and those of His Holy Church, so as to live always in that charity which they set forth.

Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, I ask in particular this special favor: (Mention your favor).

DEDICATION OF ONE'S FAMILY:

Most loving Jesus, by Your sublime and beautiful virtues of humility, obedience, poverty, modesty, charity, patience, and gentleness, You blessed with peace and happiness the family which You chose on earth. In Your mercy look upon my family. We belong to You, for we have received Your many blessings over many years and we entrust ourselves to Your loving care.

Look upon my family in Your loving kindness, preserve us from danger, give us help in time of need, and grant us the grace to persevere to the end in imitation of Your holy Family, so that having revered You and loved You faithfully on earth, we may praise You eternally in heaven.

Mary, dearest Mother, to your intercession we have recourse, knowing that your Divine Son will hear your prayers. Glorious patriarch, Saint Joseph, help us by your powerful prayers and offer our prayers to Jesus through Mary's hands. Amen..

PRAYER:

Lord Jesus Christ, being subject to Mary and Joseph, You sanctified family life by Your beautiful virtues. Grant that we, with the help of Mary and Joseph, may be taught by the example of Your holy Family, and may after death enjoy its everlasting companionship.

Lord Jesus, help us ever to follow the example of Your holy Family, that in the hour of our death Your glorious Virgin Mother together with Saint Joseph may come to meet us, and we may be worthy to be received by You into the everlasting joys of heaven. You live and reign forever. Amen

*(excerpted from: www.ewtn.com)

ORIGIN OF THE HOLY FAMILY DEVOTION

*"Devotion to the Holy Family first appears in the late Middle Ages. Prior to this period, there were two major obstacles impeding the emergence of this cult. First, a strong, positive theology of the person and mission of St. Joseph was lacking. Veneration of the Holy Family is inextricably linked with devotion to St. Joseph, and the former did not appear until the latter flourished. The image of St. Joseph as an active, full-fledged participant in the Holy Family had to be established before it was possible to consider Jesus, Mary, and Joseph as forming an integral and credible family unit. Second, there was no word or expression to denote "nuclear family" (a family unit consisting of a mother, father and children). At the time, the word "family" was understood to mean "extended family" (all those living under the authority of the *paterfamilias*), rather than "nuclear family," as it does today. Both of these obstacles would be removed in the late medieval period, due principally to the efforts of Jean Gerson (1363-1429), the eloquent and prolific chancellor of the University of Paris.

Gerson has been described as the founder of that branch of theology which today we call "Josephology." He conducted an active campaign to rescue St. Joseph from the relative neglect of earlier periods, to correct mistaken notions about him found in the apocryphal gospels and often reflected in art and literature, and to promote his cult among the faithful. Gerson systematically reworked St. Joseph's image from that of an aged, ineffective attendant to the Virgin and Christ Child, to a vigorous youthful man who was the divinely-appointed head of God's household, a paradigm of perfection who had been sanctified in the womb and was thus incapable of sin, the protector of God's plan for salvation, and industrious provider for the Holy Family, and, along with his spouse, Mary, an exemplar of holy matrimony. As if to underscore that the cult of St. Joseph is the foundation for that of the Holy Family, throughout his writings, Gerson always refers to Jesus, Joseph, and Mary in that order.

Gerson's transformation of St. Joseph's image made it possible to think about the Holy Family in a new way. Gerson also made it possible to speak about the Holy Family by coining the expression "earthly trinity" to speak about Jesus, Mary, and Joseph as a "nuclear family" in the modern sense. Although Gerson did not explicitly compare the "earthly trinity" of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph with the blessed Trinity in heaven, such a comparison is implicit since previously the use of the word was reserved to the three divine Persons. Henceforth, it became popular to refer to and to depict in the visual arts the Holy Family as a trinity which replicated on earth the blessed Trinity in heaven."~Fr. Joseph F. Chorpenning, OSFS

*(excerpted from: www.franciscanfocus.com)