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THE FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY



Dear Friends,

In 1981, Pope John Paul II, in his apostolic exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* (The Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World), reinforced the concept of the family as the “domestic church” with its role in fostering prayer, teaching the faith, and nurturing Christian virtues. He highlighted that in the family, the Christian faith is first proclaimed to children, making the family vital to the mission of the Church, and the most fundamental institution in the world.

As we honour the Holy Family, one of the best ways to do so is to prayerfully ponder the daily life that the Holy Family shared. Because Scripture does not record many of their family interactions in Nazareth, much is left to our prayerful imagination. What we do know is that human familial

virtue within the Holy Family, especially between mother and Son, was at a level of perfection. The kindness, respect, obedience, unity, charity, and every other Christian virtue that they lived must become the model for Christian living and for family life.

The Holy Family began with apparent scandal when Mary became pregnant while betrothed to Joseph. Mary and Joseph suffered through the gossip and misunderstandings this miraculous pregnancy brought with it. Though Joseph learned of this conception from an angel in a dream, it was his faith and righteousness that empowered him to remain faithful to Mary and love her with a pure heart. Their family began in Bethlehem, in poverty and rejection. They then fled to Egypt to protect their Child from the paranoia and cruelty of Herod. They later returned to Nazareth and lived faithfully with family and friends. Jesus learned the trade of woodworking from Joseph, grew in wisdom and knowledge, spoke with the elders in the Temple at the age of twelve, and remained obedient to his earthly parents. St. Thomas Aquinas teaches us that Jesus had direct knowledge of the Beatific Vision from the moment of His conception and had the fullness of infused knowledge. But He also grew in acquired knowledge, learning with a human mind through sensory experience and conceptual understanding. Mary and Joseph watched this growth, participated in it, grew from it themselves, and Mary “pondered all these things in her heart” (Luke 2:51).

As you ponder their inner family dynamics, relationships, and charity, use them as a model of how best to relate to your own family. Some families more fully imitate those sacred virtues; others fall gravely short. Look into your own heart and ask the Holy Family to teach you how to show greater love to those in your family. Though you will never arrive at perfection, you can receive inspiration from their lives, leading to greater growth and unity, making your own family a greater source of strength for your Christian living.

Prayer: Most Holy Family of Nazareth, you were a true school of love in which the perfection of family love grew strong. Please bestow upon me, my family, and families everywhere the grace needed to more fully imitate the love you shared, so that families everywhere will continue to be the fundamental building block of the world. Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, pray for us and have mercy on all. Jesus, I trust in You.

First Sunday of Christmas Year C

When	Where	Masses Requested	Saints & Feasts
Sat 28 th Dec 5.30pm	St. Peter's		Adoration followed by Mass
Sun 29 th Dec 9.00am 11.00am	St. Michael's St. Peter's		The Holy Family Rosary at 10.40am followed by Mass
Mon 30 th Dec	Fr. Maria's Day off		
Tue 31 st Dec 9.30am	St. Peter's		
Wed 1 st Jan 9.30am 11.00am	St. Peter's St. Michael's		Mary, the Holy Mother of God, - solemnity New Year Day
Thu 2 nd Jan 9.30am	St. Peter's	Hugo Shepherd – Int.	Sts. Basil and Gregory
Fri 3 rd Jan 11.30am	St. Peter's	Requiem Mass of Veronica Scullion	The most holy name of Jesus

SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION

In St. Peter's Saturday 5.30pm to 6.00pm

In St. Michael's Wednesday 10.30am to 11.00am

A Warm Welcome: today is Sunday 29th December. As always, we welcome visitors and newcomers to join our "regulars," asking Almighty God to bestow His blessings and graces on us all. You are most welcome to join us for coffee and tea in the Parish Hall.

GOODBYE

TO

2024

WELCOME

TO

2025

THANK YOU

As we come to the end of the year, it is therefore the time to thank all those who have contributed and those who have given their time either by their Ministry, attending Mass, or contributing to the parishes financially. Thank you to our Readers, Ministers of Holy Communion, Elaine, Sacristans, Altar Servers, musicians, flower arrangers, and church cleaners, who have prepared the churches this Christmas.

Thank you too for the generosity shown to me in this year's Charismas Offering and your thoughtfulness and affection with gifts and cards, you are very kind. As we enter this New Year, we pray that it may bring blessings and new beginnings for each of us.



SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

We are delighted to announce that Bishop Bosco will celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation at **St. Peter's on Wednesday, 11th June 2025**. Preparation classes will commence on Monday, 3rd February 2025.

Registration forms, along with an outline of the course, will be available at the back of the church. We kindly invite those wishing to receive the Sacrament of

Confirmation to collect a form, complete it and return it to the parish office or to Cathy Nelson or Audrey.

Let us prepare together for this special journey of faith.

A NOTE FROM THE PARISH PRIEST

I will be away in India from 7th January to 7th February for my home holidays. During this time, there will be no weekday Masses, but weekend Masses will continue as usual. In case of any emergency, please do not hesitate to approach Elaine, our parish administrator. Elaine will be available in the office at St. Peter's on **Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays.**

As I embark on this journey, I humbly ask you to keep me in your prayers, as you will certainly be in mine. Let us continue to pray for one another, and I look forward to returning refreshed and recharged to serve our parish family.

Thank you for your understanding and support.

PARISH MAGAZINE

After the hiatus brought on by Covid, we are hoping to reinstate the annual St. Peter's and St. Michael's Parish Magazine. This is YOUR magazine, outlining what went on in the parishes during 2024, so it needs input from YOU! We would like short articles and photos about events, regular occurrences and the organizations and groups that make our parishes work: anything from First Holy Communion and confirmation to weddings and baptism; farewells to parishioners who have passed on; special events like fundraisers and fetes; info about regular catholic societies like the Catenians and Legion of Mary, stories of pilgrimages or interesting trips; and we also want photos and notes from the flower arrangers, music organizers, after Mass coffeemakers etc. You know what you do for the parish, so tell us about it please email your contributions as soon as possible to cirencester.stpeter@cliftondiocese.com or tetbury.stmichael@cliftondiocese.com or hand in your hard copy offerings to either Elaine or Fr. Maria.

Please may we have your contributions by 6th January 2025; THANK YOU.

A SPECIAL NOTE OF THANKS FROM CAFOD

A special word of thanks to Cathy Nelson, St. Peter's representative for CAFOD, for her tireless efforts in raising such a significant amount. Heartfelt thanks also to all who supported her in this remarkable achievement.

CAFOD Catholic Agency for
Overseas Development

Special thanks this Harvest to

St Peter

for raising

£1,049.70

to support CAFOD projects
helping communities around the
world build a brighter future.



Yes, I know what plans I have in mind
for you, declares the Lord, **plans for
peace, not for disaster,
to give you a future
and a hope."**

Jeremiah 29:11

Thank you

Rakhi (aged 10) from southern Bangladesh. Your generosity supports CAFOD projects, like creating eco-villages to help families like Rakhi's adapt to climate change.



Catholic Agency for
Overseas Development

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The Parish Priest
St Peter,
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United Kingdom

19 December 2024

SG06

Dear Father,

Thank you to all parishioners at St Peter for your generous support for CAFOD this year and for your latest donation of £1,049.70 which we received on 16 December, 2024. Thank you so much for being there for our global family.

Thank you for your tremendous generosity this Family Fast Day! Please could you pass on our thanks to your parishioners by displaying this poster of special thanks for their open-handed support.

Your parish is helping local experts like Dr Nasha reach people with vital help.

Dr Nasha asked me to share this message with you. She said:

"We are incredibly grateful to you for thinking of us and helping. It's so heart-warming to know we have friends who are there for us when we need it most."

By supporting families like Meera's, struck by climate disasters, you are putting into action Pope Francis' renewed call to care for our common home.

Thanks to your generosity and prayers, families facing the toughest challenges – such as floods, conflict, and economic turmoil – will receive the practical support they need to rebuild their lives and pursue their hopes for the future.

If you need anything from us, please do get in touch - we're here for you! You can call our supporter care team on 0303 303 3030 or email us at cafod@cafod.org.uk

Thank you and God bless

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michelle Oakford'.

Michelle Oakford
Head of Supporter Relations



R.I.P



**Veronica Scullion (known as Vee)
(05.10.1934 - 12.12.2024)**

Eternal rest grant unto her Oh! Lord and let perpetual light shine upon her, May she rest in peace.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE REPOSE OF THE SOUL OF VERONICA SCULLION:

We regret to inform you of the passing of Veronica Scullion, beloved wife of Alexander Scullion, who departed this life on 12th December. Her Requiem

Mass will be celebrated on Friday, 3rd January, at 11:30 am at St. Peter's, Cirencester, followed by cremation at North Wilts Crematorium at 1:00 pm.
Please keep Veronica and her family in your prayers during this time of mourning.



Offertory Collection

Last Week:

St. Peter's: £293.19 (incl. via the Dona Machine)
Second Collection (Christmas Flowers): £67.20
Christmas Raffle: £136.00

St. Michael: £126.10
Second Collection (Christmas Flowers): £35.59

WISH YOU A PEACEFUL AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR

THANK YOU
