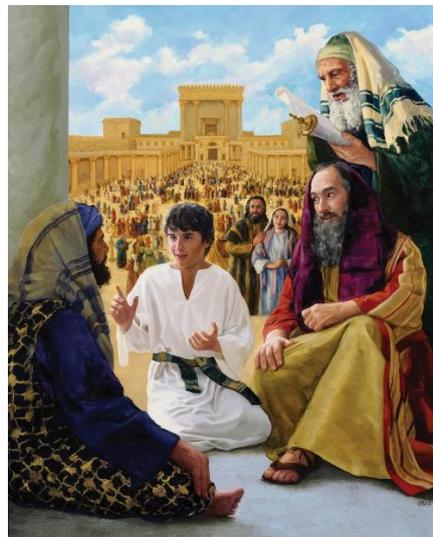


Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph



Our Gospel today tells the story of the twelve-year-old Jesus going with his parents to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. In those days, the women would be travelling in one group and the men in another. Children could go in either group. It was not until they had been travelling back to Nazareth for a day that the realisation dawns that Jesus is not with Mary or Joseph. When they discover that he is missing, Mary and Joseph are distraught like most parents would be. They search all over for him and have to return to Jerusalem.

At Passover, however, Jerusalem would be so full of people that they couldn't find him. Luke tells us that three days later they found him in the Temple sitting amongst the learned people, listening to them and asking them questions. It was tradition that a rabbi would sit explaining the scriptures to children in the Temple Court. In Jesus' case, however, people were amazed at his wisdom and understanding. It is no coincidence that Luke chooses three days – he is pointing us to the death and resurrection of Jesus.



Jesus' response to his parents' anxiety appears on the surface to be rather harsh and not in keeping with what we would expect from him. Yet, for many biblical scholars, this revelation of Jesus as God's son, long before his baptism in the Jordan with the words. 'You are my Son, the Beloved' is a very significant one.

Mary and Joseph did not really understand when Jesus said, *'Did you not know that I must be busy with my Father's affairs?'*

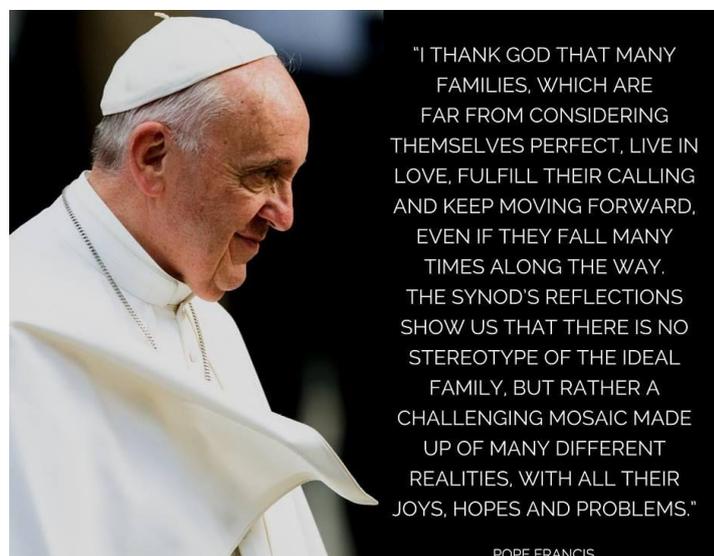
Mary and Joseph's faith and their reverence towards the boy Jesus led them not to ask any further questions but to reflect on Jesus' words and behaviour in this instance, as they had done on other occasions. Without fully understanding Jesus or the events that were unfolding in her family, Mary was willing to believe and trust in the wisdom and love of God.

We are then told that Jesus went with Mary and Joseph back to Nazareth where he *'increased in wisdom, in stature and in favour with God.'*

Today, as well as celebrating the wonderful variety of types of families we have in our community, we celebrate the fact that **we** are family – the family of the Most Holy Trinity, Dockhead.



May we, as the family of the Most Holy Trinity, welcome all into our parish and our family, celebrating the *"mosaic of families"* of which Pope Francis speaks.



"I THANK GOD THAT MANY FAMILIES, WHICH ARE FAR FROM CONSIDERING THEMSELVES PERFECT, LIVE IN LOVE, FULFILL THEIR CALLING AND KEEP MOVING FORWARD, EVEN IF THEY FALL MANY TIMES ALONG THE WAY. THE SYNOD'S REFLECTIONS SHOW US THAT THERE IS NO STEREOTYPE OF THE IDEAL FAMILY, BUT RATHER A CHALLENGING MOSAIC MADE UP OF MANY DIFFERENT REALITIES, WITH ALL THEIR JOYS, HOPES AND PROBLEMS."

POPE FRANCIS