



FEAST OF  
THE  
HOLY FAMILY  
(YEAR C)

### **Luke 2:41-52**

**41 Every year his parents used to go to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover. 42 When he was twelve years old, they went up for the feast as usual. 43 When they were on their way home after the feast, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem without his parents knowing it. 44 They assumed he was with the caravan, and it was only after a day's journey that they went to look for him among their relations and acquaintances. 45 When they failed to find him they went back to Jerusalem looking for him everywhere.**

**46 Three days later, they found him in the Temple, sitting among the doctors, listening to them, and asking them questions; 47 and all those who heard him were astounded at his intelligence and his replies. 48 They were overcome when they saw him, and his mother said to him, 'My child, why have you done this to us? See how worried your father and I have been, looking for you.' 49 'Why were you looking for me?' he replied. 'Did you not know that I must be busy with my Father's affairs?' 50 But they did not understand what he meant.**

**51 He then went down with them and came to Nazareth and lived under their authority. His mother stored up all these things in her heart. 52 And Jesus increased in wisdom, in stature, and in favour with God and men.**

**Other readings: Ecclesiasticus 3:2-6,12-14 Psalm 127 Colossians 3:12-21**

Today's gospel gives us a rare glimpse of the 'hidden life' of Jesus, the years he spent under the care of Mary and Joseph. Luke displays their fidelity to their Jewish faith, and he underlines the autonomy of the young Jesus in staying behind in Jerusalem. We encounter the mystery of the Son of God who has become man. He is fully human and subject to his parents, but from his earliest years Jesus is involved in his Father's affairs. The Temple doctors are astounded at the learning of Jesus, and this prepares for the astonishment of the crowds once his public ministry begins.

The story reaches its climax with the finding of Jesus by his parents. Luke stresses the anxiety of Mary, foreshadowing the three days of anguish when Jesus dies. His parents did not understand Jesus' words, but Mary will 'store these things in her heart'. She is the contemplative who receives the word and puts it into practice. Luke brings the stories of Jesus' early life to an end by reminding us that Jesus grew in wisdom as the years passed.

*What does this story of Jesus' adolescence really teach us?*

*How is Luke preparing us for later events in the gospel story?*

*Let us pray for patience with ourselves and with others as we seek to grow in wisdom.*

*Let us pray for all our young people that they will be open to doing God's will.*

