

Feast of the Holy Family, Cycle B

**Focus:** Keeping our promises

**Gathering, Attendance Stickers** (children find/sit on a carpet square)

Say: *Good Morning everyone, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. Last week we celebrated Christmas, which was about \_\_\_\_\_ and today we are going to talk about the Holy Family and how we can be holy, too. Let's begin.*

### **Opening Prayer**

Together we make the Sign of the Cross.

Say: *Now let's put our hands together and bow our heads.*

*Loving God, you have called us to be holy, like the Holy Family. Help us to be kind to one another, patient and honest with one another. We want to be holy, as you are holy. We pray in the name of Jesus. Amen*

### **Song/Movement**

“Joy to the World” track 12 from Songs 4 Worship Kid's, Christmas...

Play music, encourage children to stretch or move to the music, turn to each other and shake hands, saying hello. Have children sit on their carpet squares when finished.

### **Memory Verse**

Say: *Now let's take a moment together to learn a verse from the bible.*

*“This child will be a sign for all the people of Israel.”*

Have the children repeat the verse after you a couple of times.

Ask: *We are going to find out what this means in today's Gospel.*

### **Gospel Story**

Say: *Today we are reading from the Gospel of Luke.*

Have children make sign of the cross on their forehead, mouth and heart saying. *“Lord, open my mind, my lips and my heart so that I may learn it, speak it and love it.”*

### **Narration with Skit:**

(You will need a Mary, Joseph, Simeon and Anna; have your helper dress the people with the costumes in the cabinet. There will be a baby Jesus there, too. Simeon and Anna should be able to read. While your helper is dressing the actors you can have a discussion about promises.)

Does anyone know what today is called? *New Year's* Most people start the new year by making a New Year's Resolution. Making a resolution is like making a promise to ourselves that we are going to do certain things. Usually, it is a promise to do better in the

new year than we did the year before. Here is a list of resolutions that might be good for children to make.

- I will watch less TV and get more exercise.
- I will wear my seat belt every time I get in a car.
- I will be nice to other kids. (Even my brothers and sisters!)
- I will put away my toys when I am through playing with them.

Can you think of some more resolutions you could make?

Some people don't keep their New Year's resolution. After all, they are just promises to yourself. Well, a promise is a promise -- and it is important to keep your promises -- even if it is just a promise to yourself. God is always faithful in keeping His promises.

**Narrator:** In the Bible, there is a story about a man named Simeon. (Simeon should appear) Simeon was a very old man who had faithfully served God all of his life. Simeon was looking forward to the coming of the Messiah. God had promised Simeon that he would not die until he had seen the Christ, the promised Messiah. A few days after Jesus was born, Mary and Joseph took him to the temple to dedicate him to God. (Mary & Joseph should appear with baby walking toward Simeon) Simeon was in the temple as he usually was. As soon as Simeon saw the baby, he knew that Jesus was the Christ and that God had kept his promise that he would not die until he had seen the Messiah.

**Simeon:** "Now, God, you have kept your promise. I have seen the Savior. This child will be a sign for all the people of Israel. Some people will accept him and be saved" and then Mary let's him hold the baby.

**Narrator:** Then, Anna, a holy woman appears and sees Jesus. She immediately starts to praise God (kneels with praying hands) and tells everyone that the Messiah has come.

**Anna:** The Messiah has come. Our Savior is here! The Messiah is born!

**Narrator:** God was faithful to his promise to Simeon just as he is faithful to his promises to you and me.

Today, as we begin a new year, let's make some promises to try to be more like Jesus (before you recite each promise, you might want to discuss what each would mean);

*I promise to be kind.*

*I promise to be patient.*

*I promise to be honest.*

*I promise to be gentle.*

*I promise to forgive.*

*I promise to be patient.*

*I promise to love.*

All of these things can help us to be more holy, like Jesus, Mary and Joseph and just as God is faithful in keeping his promises, we should be faithful in keeping our promises.

### **Gospel Activity**

Coloring Activity-Simeon and Anna praising God. You can play more Christmas songs during coloring time.

### **Closing Prayer**

(Children respond: “We Believe!”)

Ask: *Do we believe in God, who loves us and cares for us?*

*Do we believe in Jesus, who is our light, and shows us the way to be holy?*

*Do we believe in the Holy Spirit, who helps us to be kind and patient, honest and gentle, forgiving and loving?*

### **Lining Up/Closing Song**

Play “Jesus Loves Me” track 1 from “Toddler Bible Songs” while children put away any materials and line up. Remind them it is important that they return to their family quietly so that we may all listen and pray together in church.