

## Nativity of the Lord



**I**n comparison to the celebration of Easter which dates back to the second century, the celebration of Christmas is of late origin, dating back only to the fourth century.

No claim is made for December 25 being the actual date of Jesus' birth, but it is probably no accident that this celebration of the coming of the true light falls at a time of increasing daylight.

Expanding that symbolism, four separate, carefully chosen and crafted sets of readings and prayers are prescribed for the various times of celebration of this solemnity: vigil, midnight, dawn, and day.

The images contained in these readings and prayers journey from early hope to radiant fulfillment.

*This bulletin insert was written by Marion Eagen, a liturgist and musician in the diocese of Scranton, Pa. © 2002 Resource Publications, Inc., 160 E. Virginia St. #290, San Jose, CA 95112, (408) 286-8505. All rights reserved.*

## Holy Family



**T**oday's liturgy not only offers us a glimpse into the life of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph but also gives us an opportunity to pray for our own families.

Although private devotions to the Holy Family go back to about the seventeenth century, the feast did not enter the church's calendar until 1921.

One of the readings designated for the day comes from Colossians 3 wherein wives are exhorted to be subordinate to their husbands. A shortened version of this reading which omits that passage and is more in keeping with our modern idea of a woman's place in the family is permitted as an option.

*This bulletin insert was written by Marion Eagen, a liturgist and musician in the diocese of Scranton, Pa. © 2002 Resource Publications, Inc., 160 E. Virginia St. #290, San Jose, CA 95112, (408) 286-8505. All rights reserved.*