

FLIGHT TO EGYPT

THE ULTIMATE “PROTECTIVE PARENTS”

Being a parent can be described as a multi-faceted vocation. A father and mother are called upon to provide for every need of their child – sometimes at a great expense and often with greater sacrifice. A child must be taught, nurtured, fed and disciplined. These are just a few parental responsibilities that a father and mother are obligated to meet.

Perhaps the most important duty, however that every parent must embrace is protecting their child from harm and misfortune. Sometimes lost in the story of our Lord’s Nativity is the effort made by Joseph and the Virgin Mary to protect their precious child from King Herod. He slaughtered scores of innocent children in Bethlehem and its surrounding region in his rage-driven quest to eliminate anyone who would dare be referred to as The “King of the Jews.”

The Gospel of St. Matthew gives us the account of the courageous actions of our Lord’s earthly parents. An angel of the Lord warns Joseph in a dream: “Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him.” (Matthew 2:13) In the dead of night, they fled from their home in Bethlehem and embarked upon a long and dangerous journey, traveling hundreds of miles over rugged, unfamiliar terrain. Somehow, they safely arrived in Egypt, remaining there until Joseph received another heavenly visitor saying: “Arise, take the Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the Child’s life are dead.” (Matthew 2:20) Their stay in Egypt is shrouded in mystery. What we do know is this: Joseph and Mary were the ultimate “protective parents,” preserving unharmed the One Who would grow up to be the Saviour of the world!