

Based on the gospel for Sunday 31 December – Luke 2:22-40

"And as the child grew to maturity, he was filled with wisdom."

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Many of us have just spent Christmas with our families, amongst all the excitement and joy that brings. Some of us may have found Christmas a very lonely time, when we miss our families – children who have grown up, or perhaps a husband or wife who has died.

But we have all celebrated together the birth of a very special child, Jesus, our Lord. We can each recognise the pride that Joseph and Mary feel as Jesus grows and becomes strong, and learns all that he needs to amongst his family and community.

Shetara is a midwife. She is also a Rohingya Muslim who has fled Myanmar into the refugee camps in Bangladesh where she is being helped by Caritas. She left a dreadful tragedy behind her when her pregnant cousin died trying to save her son from a burning house. Yet since arriving in Bangladesh, Shetara has already helped several women give birth safely and this helps her find a sense of hope.

"It is a blessing if I can save the mother and child together," she says. "When I see a new life come into the world, I feel it is a gift from God."



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God our Father, we pray that parents around the world experience the joy of seeing their children grow up happy and healthy. May we strengthen and support those who are struggling to feed, clothe and educate their children. Amen.