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Note: The readings before the Gospel from year A may also be used, and so there is a choice of two sets of first readings, psalms and second readings.

The Gospel is the same no matter which set of readings are chosen. What all these readings share is that they deal with the importance of the family and family life. Whether it is the reading from Sirach, talking about how family members ought to treat each other or the reading from the first letter of John which reminds us all of how we are the children of the Father, it is clear that God has seen to it that in the family we find something of the divine love which the Father and Christ share.

It is important not to forget the needs of those who live alone on this day, and those whose families are far away or estranged; the first reading assigned for Year 'C' does this in an interesting way, especially when joined to the Gospel of the day: they are both stories of coming from a family and yet growing up and beyond the boundaries of the family. With a thoroughly modern message, we can see that, just as Jesus and Samuel, we are in part where we come from, but like them many people are called to places beyond the reach of family and friends.

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