

**For The Bulletin Of
December 30, 2018**



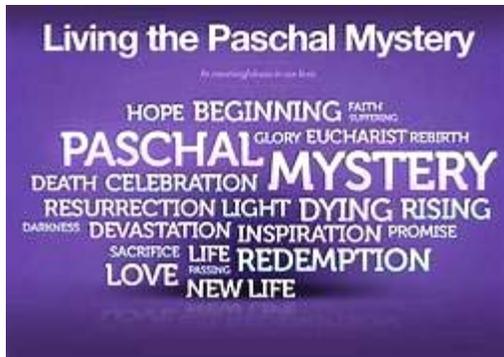
THE FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

From Father Robert

A missing child is a parent's worst fear. We can imagine being in a grocery store, a department store, or even an amusement park and the panic that would overtake us if a child in our care was nowhere to be found. We might have been relying on someone else to keep an eye on this young one, only to realize that was a misunderstanding. Such things happen occasionally and often the child is found shortly thereafter. Other times it results in tragedy. But in today's gospel story the Holy Family had lost Jesus in the capital city of Jerusalem. This is a reminder that though Jesus' family is holy it was not without challenges, like any family. Joseph and Mary dealt with parenting a preteen Who thought He was fine on His own. Obviously miscommunication was a challenge for them as it might be for us as well.

It can be simple for us to imagine that the Holy Family was perfect, something to which we could never measure up. But Luke gives us a story of a family with real-life challenges and problems. In fact, this is a challenge we would not wish upon anyone, losing track of a child for days in a major city.'

Even so, such a story might give us hope as we deal with daily activities in family life, striving not for perfection, which is an unattainable ideal. But instead, we recognize that family life can be messy, punctuated with misunderstandings, miscommunication, and mistakes. Such events are not "sinful" and they were obviously part of life for the Holy Family. It is significant that Luke tells us not only that Jesus was obedient to His parents but that He also grew in wisdom. He was not born fully formed and all-knowing. As a human being He naturally learned things. And simply reflecting on this fact can be the source of profound meditation on our part. We who believe that Jesus as divine also believe that He was human. He was not a divine puppet but a flesh-and-blood human being, Who was raised in a family and grew in wisdom. Our own families are places of holiness. We will have challenges as the Holy Family did. But we can deal with them forthrightly, knowing that the relationships we have in this most basic human unit are a means of growing in holiness.



The family has been called the “domestic church” as it is the first encounter children have with the Gospel, and it is the dwelling place of faith and Christian relationships. But oftentimes we hear such ideas and think that a family must therefore be a place of perfection and we all know from our own experiences that families (or churches for that matter) are anything but places of perfection. So the idea can be daunting and seem unattainable. But life gives us an image of family life that might be more relatable. Even the Holy Family had their share of challenges, and so we have hope for ourselves and our own family situations. We know from experience – confirmed by research – that we learn more by imitation and example than we do by preaching and teaching. In other words, one’s actions speak more loudly than words. How we live the gospel message in the midst of family life says much more about our faith commitment than what we say about the Gospel. Our homes and families ought to be places of security, welcome, love, care, concern, and forgiveness. Speaking about such things does not mean as much as living them. The same can be said for the Holy Family. Their behaviors spoke more loudly than their words. Today on this Feast of the Holy Family, we might pause to consider what message we convey by our actions.

- How do you experience your family as a “domestic church?”
- Where do you find “holy imperfection” in your own family?
- How does your family support each other in times of stress and sadness?
- In the gospel today Jesus calls the temple “my Father’s house.” Do you feel at home in our church community? How do you experience it as a place of shelter and welcome? How might you help it grow to be even more a House of God?



About Liturgy: The Domestic Church

This Sunday provides us an opportunity to reflect on how households are the church in miniature. The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church says that the family is “regarded as the domestic church” (*Lumen Gentium 11*). In the family Christian spouses signify the unity between Christ and the church, help one another attain holiness through the love they share in their marriage, and build up the church by raising children in the faith.

These kinds of households, made up of married spouses with children, hold a special place among the people of God. This does not mean, however, that other kinds of households cannot be holy as well. Many in our assembly do not reflect this “ideal” image of a holy family. Today’s gospel gives us a glimpse into the “holy imperfection” even the Holy Family experienced. For what makes a family holy is not perfection but love that is shown in compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, perseverance, and forgiveness. All of us in our own households can surely reflect and inspire that kind of holiness.



The Floral Arrangement before the Altar today is placed to the Glory of God and in Loving Memory of **Dan O’Connor from the O’Connor, Nelms, and Barnes Families.**



Tomorrow, Monday, December 31st, we will celebrate The Vigil Eucharist for the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God at 4:00 p.m.

On Tuesday, January 1, 2019, we will welcome the first day of the New Year with the celebration of Holy Eucharist at 11:00 a.m. It is New Year’s Day and the World Day

of Prayer for Peace as well. I hope you will join us.



On behalf of myself, Father Moses, and Father George, I wish to thank all those who were so gracious, kind, and generous to the three of us with your cards, personal notes, the baked goods, bottles of wine, candy, Gift Cards, and money gifts, all sincerely appreciated. The greatest gift we receive is your presence, your support, prayer, and love for all of us and for our parish. With continued good wishes and blessings to you all for the Christmas Season and into the New Year!



Christmas and its liturgies over these twelve wondrous days does not happen without the gifts, talents, and abilities of many people and on behalf of all of us, I want to express our heart-felt gratitude to: **Lectors, Ushers, Greeters, Eucharistic Ministers, Altar Servers, Adult Acolytes, the Art & Environment Committee**, all those who contributed so generously to make

the environment possible; to **Sherry Morris**, our resident Graphic Artist who created the magnificent “Icons” of Mary and the Child and the Herald Angels; **our Sacristans**, and especially **Peter Degl’Innocenti**; **Dilcia Aparicio** who launders and irons all the sacred linens; to **Don Pearson, the Cantors and Choir**; the **Members of the Liturgy Committee**; and to all those who provided Security for our Christmas Liturgies, and especially **Steve Rojek and Don Benson**; to the **Office Staff and Office Volunteers**; to our **Bulletin Assembly Team**; and to **those who cleaned and cared for the church and bathrooms**. All that each of you did is greatly appreciated.



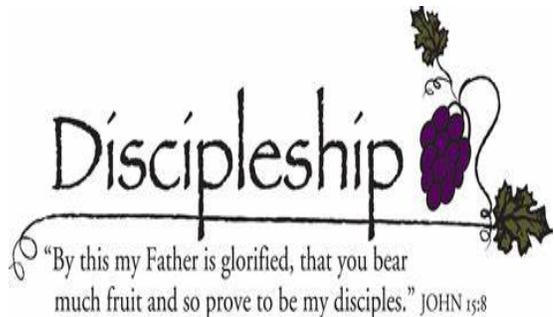
Next weekend, January 5th and 6th we will celebrate The Twelfth Day of Christmas, Epiphany, with the Procession of the Three Kings as well as other persons of the Christmas Story. You are invited to help make this possible so please be in touch with Don Pearson to see how you can participate.

Additionally, we sing “The Twelve Days of Christmas” which has become another one of our beloved traditions during the Christmas Season as well as the Giving of the

Birthday Blessing at the conclusion of each liturgy.



On behalf of myself, the Pastoral Staff, the Pastoral Council, and the Finance Council, we wish to extend to you greetings for the New Year of 2019, much happiness, the best of health, many blessings, and the deepening of your faith. Thank you for all you have done for us and for the parish this past year and all you will continue to do in the new year to come as we continue the work of Jesus of building the Father’s Kingdom in our midst and being missionary disciples. Let us together continue to “kiss the face of God.”



The Distinguished Discipleship Award

Last Sunday, at the conclusion of our 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, I had the great privilege of presenting the Distinguished Discipleship award to **Jovita Vera**. For the past twenty-five years, she has served faithfully in the ministry of Pastoral Care,

bringing Holy Communion to the sick, the homebound, those in hospital, convalescent homes, and the shut-in and praying with and for them as they bear the cross of ill health. She has also facilitated our Prayer Chain ministry, responding to calls for prayer for parishioners, family members, and friends in need of the presence and healing touch of Jesus. All of this she has done with great joy, humility, gentleness, commitment, dedication, and great love. We congratulate her on the reception of this recognition and thank her for her living of discipleship in such a distinguished way.

