



## ***Feast of the Holy Family*** ***YEAR A – December 29, 2019***

It is the feast of the Holy Family. Today's scripture readings have a beautiful message for all of us. The message is that we need to invest more time, -- quality time, -- in our family life. The Old Testament is filled with many ways to do that.

The prophet Sirach today (Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14), reminds us that our concern should be, not only for children, but for parents as well. He says, “Kindness to a father or mother will not be forgotten. It will be counted against the debt of our sins.”

St. Paul (Colossians 3:12-21) reminds us that in our families, we need heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. We must bear with one another and forgive one another. Recall the words of Professor Luskin at Stanford University, “There is no healing without forgiveness.” All the money in the world cannot buy that kind of healing. That kind of healing is priceless.

The Gospel (Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23) reminds us that it was in a loving environment that Jesus grew in wisdom, age and grace. Why is that important? It’s important because:

- 🌸 If a child lives with negative criticism, the child is going to learn how to condemn. That doesn't happen in a holy family.
- 🌸 If a child lives with hostility, the child is going to learn how to fight. Kids can learn that on TV and on their computers and iPads. They shouldn't have to learn it in their own family.
- 🌸 If a child lives with ridicule, the child is going to learn to be shy. Each time we ridicule a child, there is a price to pay. Ridicule cripples a child. Ridicule is not correction.
- 🌸 If a child lives with shame, the child is going to learn to feel guilty. That is not our Lord's way of dealing with children. But you already know that.
- 🌸 If a child lives with encouragement, the child will have confidence.
- 🌸 If a child lives with fairness, the child will learn justice.
- 🌸 If a child lives in a family where faith is practiced, the child will learn to trust God.

Today we celebrate the feast of the Holy Family. It is a beautiful model for all of us who have families - and that includes *ALL* of us.

We are reminded that every member of every family is important in God's eyes. All of us must strive to be holy. It can be done. God is ready to help us.

For a few moments in “prayerful silence”, reflect on how well your family is doing in the business of being holy. What part do you play in making it all happen? That “prayerful silence” is not the absence of noise, it is the absence self.