

WORD FROM THE PASTOR

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO YOU ALL!



The Sunday after Christmas is the celebration of the Holy Family, Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. In honoring the Holy Family, we honor all families.

Family is the first place where love is learned and faith is nurtured.

Perhaps, it is a good time to reflect on family life as family members gather to celebrate Christmas. Jesus' family embarked on a journey of faith, keeping tradition as part of their customs. **The family is called to preserve the faith and values that are at the core of one's life,** helping them grow as Christians and as human beings. It is in the family that one learns how to be obedient and respectful to God and others. It is in the family that we learn how to be a generous and loving person.

Family helps us to build and shape our character and personality,

who we are and what we become. Family shares both the pains and joys of each other. The Gospel tells us that Jesus is no longer a baby; he is twelve years old. He is lost in the temple. His parents, not seeing their child, set out to look for him, first in the caravan, then in Jerusalem. It took them three days to find him, "in the Temple, sitting among the teachers of the Law." And Mary quite legitimately expresses her concern: "My child, why have you done this to us? See how your father and I have suffered in searching for you!" Suffered in searching for him?

Mary expresses here a reality that resonates with the experience of many today! Raising one or more children is not an easy task. It is both a joy and a source of many worries and sufferings... Jesus' disappearance certainly surprised his parents, as the child Jesus was generally very obedient, as the Gospel clearly states.

The Holy Family also experienced difficult times. Let us remember, at the beginning, Joseph's decision to break off his marriage before the angel spoke to him, let us remember the flight to Egypt to save the child threatened with death, and today this anxiety, this suffering that Mary and Joseph experienced for three days! A suffering that perhaps continued even after hearing him say, "Why were you searching for me? Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?" For "they did not understand what he was saying to them."

Jesus, at the age of twelve, already astonished those around him, as he would continue to do until the Cross! The Holy Family is not an ordinary family, that much is obvious; however, and this is the merit of this Gospel passage, we learn that Mary and Joseph experienced, like many ordinary parents, anxieties and worries about their child. Fathers and mothers represent Mary and Joseph in guiding their children with gentleness and understanding and behaving in a way that is worthy of the trust children place in them. Let us pray for families in the world, especially those who are facing challenges in the marriage relationships that the Lord grants them courage, determination, perseverance and faith like Mary and Joseph. **Happy Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!**

Very Rev. Fr. Lucien Eugene Pierre Ph.D., Pastor, VF

Dean of Northwest Broward Deanery of the Archdiocese Miami – December 28, 2025
