

## **Homily for Feast of the Holy Family, December 26, 2021**

**The Holy Family. Holiness. What is Holiness? Holiness is a quality which is properly understood as belonging to God alone. God is sacred, God is Holy.**

**Things and people, when consecrated, are made holy. They are set aside for Holy purposes, for God.**

**God makes people Holy. The Church is Holy because she belongs to Christ, she is His body and His bride. We grow in holiness when we participate in Christ's life and His love - which we call Charity.**

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**In our Baptism, we enter into the life of God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We belong to His family.**

**As we hear in our Second Reading today,**

**“See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called the children of God. And so we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; what we shall be has not yet been revealed. We do know that when it is revealed we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.”**

**We are set aside – we are in the world but not of it. Yet we ARE in the world. The incarnational aspect of our faith is that we are to be holy in the world and make the world holy. And again, we cannot do this by ourselves. We need to let God make us holy.**

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**And so we get to the Holy Family. Mary and Joseph are not holy because of themselves. They are not righteous in themselves.**

**But they are members of the People of God. They believe. They are immersed in the Holiness of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. They are centered on Christ, even as he is an Infant who needed their care. Even as an infant, Christ is the Holy One. He is – God is – thrice holy; Holy, Holy, Holy.**

**We are invited always – and especially reminded this day – look to the Holy Family. Be a Holy Family. Place Christ first as the Center of our families. It is not surprising that so many are attracted to Christ as infant and Christ as child. The Baby Jesus is in so many of our homes. And I have been told that it is Fr. John Beitans, my predecessor here at Saint Lawrence, who populated so many of our rooms with statues of the Infant of Prague.**

**Christ’s home is our hearts. He needs to be at the center of our hearts. Christ is the center of our Nativity Scenes – and wants to be the center of our homes, our families, and our hearts.**

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**In our Gospel today, we see a universal concern acted out. Mary and Joseph are parents worried about their child. They were good parents – worried about him, and no doubt questioning whether they were good parents.**

**But Mary and Joseph were also disciples. And knowing Jesus was their Christ and their Lord – it seems we can say that they were also worried because at this moment, they were now experiencing that Christ was not with them. Christ missing as the center of their family. Where was He?**

**This is a universal concern because it is an experience so many of us have. It is often asked, “Where is God in the midst of my struggles?” “What has happened to my earlier confidence and love?” “Doesn’t God know we have been looking for Him with great anxiety?”**

**Mary and Joseph looked for Jesus – and they found Him focused first upon the Father. And so must we. Jesus is at the center of our lives and families and homes and hearts so that He may draw us deeper into His life. And it is in this life that we can reach out to a world needing to discover His holiness.**

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**Many people find help in their walk with Christ by looking to the Holy Family, talking with all members of the Holy Family, and consecrating themselves to Christ through Mary and Joseph.**

**And this weekend, we ask their help, and look at their example, again.**

