

SAID ED December 29, 2013

The Holy Family

Today we celebrate the Feast of the Holy Family. The Church holds up this feast day to us to remind us of our call to be “holy.” Note: it celebrates the holy family, not the perfect family.

Perfectionism is a problem for many people. We are quick to point out how we fail and how far we have to go to be like the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. We are called to look to the home in Nazareth as a model of love, friendship, care, and compassion. We are all working towards these things. There are many things that can mar the life of families. One of those things may be domestic violence.

The experts among us report that domestic violence increases dramatically during the holiday season. Our scripture readings throughout the Advent-Christmas-Epiphany season call us to be aware of our surroundings and to keep our hearts open to God’s love. In a similar vein, we need to be prepared for opportunities to improve ourselves and our world – before God comes. The stress of this anticipation (the Christmas season) can put people in a tailspin. Examples of this are doing one or all the following in excess: spending money, eating, drinking, partying, running around, neglecting, or acting uncharitably toward family members who cannot or will not behave as we think they should. Violence is often part of family life when the pace picks up, when emotions are high, when the outside world looks loving and you know your family is not.

Our liturgies very often focus on the family. It is a way to help us prepare in spiritual ways to help our family be closer to the ideal. The opportunities to become more “ideal” as a family are endless, but we have to always remember becoming “ideal” is an on-going process. When a family begins to believe that they are the ideal family, it’s time to re-examine their belief. It is always good to consider how you can improve as a family, as a couple, or as an individual. We need to look creatively at how forgiveness, compassion, personal favors, and healthy activities can improve our journey to become “ideal” as we await the coming of Christ. If creative ways of improving our family life are part of the routine of life, it can even help avoid violence in our homes.

If you are dealing with domestic violence and do not know where to turn, please feel free to give me or any member of our Pastoral Staff a call at the parish office. We will do every thing we can to help you find a path to a solution.

Have a great holiday and enjoy your family!

