

Deacon Bob Corsaro
Feast of the Holy Family, Year C
1Sm 1:20-22,24-28
Col 3:12-17
Luke 2:41-52
Suzan Corsaro in Red

Happy feast of the Holy Family to You!
What a great time of year this is, Christmas time, family time.
God is with us!

It's a sensual time, a time of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting.
taking it all in., Welcoming the Lamb of God In.

Mary and Joseph welcomed the Lamb in, in a very special way.
Talk about sensual! But what happened?....There was a
disconnect.

They could not find Jesus, Could not see him, hear him, touch him.
And when they found him Mary asked him, "Why have you done
this to us? We've been looking for you with great anxiety!"

He responded, "Did you not know I must be in my father's
house?"

Scripture tells us, "Mary kept all of these things in her heart!"

While reflecting on Paul's words in the 2nd reading: "let the word
of Christ dwell in you richly! Carry it with you."

We come to realize that Christ dwelling within us can be very
sensual....seeing Christ in others, sensing his touch his presence in
our lives, receiving a taste of the divine with us.

And what happens when we lose it? Do we search for it anxiously? Is there a deep sense of Loss? A disconnect? Maybe our faith plays a very important part when this happens to us.

Trusting God, loving God, Loving one another during times of loss and disconnect.

This is one reason why I enjoy using visuals in my homilies.

It is always my hope that you connect sensually with the word of God, hear, see, feel, sink your teeth in and taste it.

Take the word into your heart as Mary did. And As Paul said, let the word of Christ dwell within you.

The visual with the violin? slow down, take time to listen, sense the presence of God within our daily lives?.

The anchor? We are all anchored to Christ through the waters of baptism. Faith is our anchor.

The boxing gloves? Being in each others corner, helping one another in lifes struggles. Being family for one another.

Today....Any guesses as to what the visual is? Something for us to keep in our hearts?

Bob told me about a conversation he had with one of our parishioners. He asked her which Christmas mass she would be attending here.

She said she wasn't, she was going to a church in Mendon with friends and family...and jokingly she added, if I like it I might stay.

Bob responded, “ if you stay, we will have to send some folks from here to kidnap you and bring you back to us.”
Very honestly, she replied, “I could never leave here...The people of this parish are my family.”

A gentle woman, this woman takes the time to quietly pray for others. Console others. Care for others suffering from cancer, as she is a cancer survivor herself. And as she cares for someone, they come to know each other. Sisters in Gods love, they are family in the Body of Christ. Family for each other.

So the visual today?

Actually, through the grace of God, you brought it with you. It would have been very difficult for you to leave it home, because you are the visual. Yes, look and see...look around you for a moment.

You are the visual for each other. Say hello to someone you don't know.

(Pull out the camera and take pictures) It's a Perfect time for a family portrait!

As we celebrate the feast of the Holy family...we come to realize we are a living sign, a presence of Holy Family to one another. We all are! Through our baptism we are called to this. Welcomed into the body of Christ. Christ has claimed us all to himself... Family.

As Paul said in the 2nd reading, “Put on love, the bond of perfection, let the peace of Christ control your hearts, the peace into which you were also called into one body.” When we put on love, we are all connected with each other. Family.

Through the scripture of Advent and Christmas we take a closer look at the Holy Family. Who Mary and Joseph were... the strong faith they possessed.

As family, they struggled as we do. They made mistakes as we do. We see them lose Jesus for three days and experience tremendous anxiety when doing so.

How hard was it for Joseph and Mary to let go of Jesus so he could share his gift, Gods gift to the world?

Like Mary, our families and Hannah in the first reading must also prepare and let our children go out into the world on their own.

Family brings with it much love and heartbreak.

How hard it is for us to say our final goodbyes to a loved one?

And we know all too well how Mary must have suffered as she watched the passion of her son Jesus.

So Christmas and this feast day are bound to stir up painful memories for some of us. Maybe even things we are experiencing at this moment in our lives. Families have not always been ideal places to live for many people. How hard it can be to rise up sometimes and find peace in very difficult family situations.

Fr, Ed mentioned to me the other day, “Family can be like fudge, we are bound to find a couple of nuts in it.”

This for some, is the raw and gritty truth.

So in our humanness, where do we find family, where family is not easily seen?

Maybe we find it in the kind woman who walks with others with cancer.

Maybe a friend or a Stephen Minister who is just happy to sit and listen to our troubles?

A random act of kindness given or received, that brings with it an affect blessed by the Holy Spirit.

On a final note, Deacon Steve's homily touched me deeply last week, as he spoke about the personal pain he has been experiencing.

The emptiness that exists within us all sometimes as we cry out as Mary and Joseph must have cried out, "where are you Jesus?"

Deacon Steve mentioned to us, while he was sad, the little girl, maybe two years old, who just walked up to him and offered him a cookie from her little bag.

Deacon Steve came to realize God was working through this little girl, she was an angel to Steve. Connected in love, in Christ, as family.

How do you think that cookie tasted to Deacon Steve?

Take a bite of the cookie, taste and see, the Lord is good!

So in a few moments we will come forward as family to receive the body of Christ, taste and see, the Lord is good!