

**December 29-30, 2018**  
**The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph**  
**Sirach 3:2-14                      Colossians 3:12-17                      Luke 2:41-52**

What were once a rarity, 'Christmas Letters' have certainly become downright common, with the budding authors relaying a year's worth of news, updates, medical traumas, accolades, travel adventures and even quantity of food consumed by guests at assorted parties! While I suppose these letters are effective tools for not having to keep repeating oneself, to my tastes, personal verbal sharing is more tantalizing, ideally over some glasses of wine and tasty nibbles (perhaps the leftovers from the holiday parties mentioned in their letters?) The sharing of news and updates among friends and family is common, it provides us with continuing connections and knowledge of those who comprise our 'family', both immediate and in varying orbits of intimacy. This weekend's selection from the Gospel of Luke is a REMEMBRANCE, probably passed down from Mary via the disciples, something she would have naturally done when she was meeting and getting to know those with whom Jesus most closely associated. (Am I the only one who sometimes wonder what she thought of Judas; did she sense anything about him that seemed 'off'?) In any case, the remembrance, from 12 years after his birth, speaks of the NORMALCY of Jesus' childhood, with perhaps HINTS, seen in hindsight, of what was to come. Our overall celebration of the Holy Family, on a larger scale, is not so much about hearing gossip and tidbits of Jesus' early years but rather, to be reminded of the value of participating within a 'FAMILY', either genetic or of our own making. While individually we are capable of much, gathered together and linking our strengths and alleviating individual shortcomings is the foundation from which GREAT things can grow. While genetically we each have DNA connections to particular individuals, these people may or may not be considered 'OUR FAMILY.' Frequently those with whom we have the strongest bonds are not DNA related but connected by relationships forged by time, trust, fire, hardship and GRACE. With the Christmas glow still lingering for another week...who is YOUR holy family? To whom do you turn in distress? With whom do you share your weakness? From whom do you learn? With whom do you wish to grow older? Among whom do you enjoy being a part of the world? (And just to be fair, feel free to apply the opposite: with whom do you wish you were NOT related, with whom you wish you did NOT share the world and with whom you really do NOT wish to grow old?)

Many still 'recovering' from the Christmas events of the past week, THANK YOU for sharing this weekend with our Santa Clara community. The calendar year about to end, tax receipts for your 2018 donations will be sent later in January. Your donations to our Development Fund, through the PSA, will be sent to you from the Diocese. On Monday, December 31<sup>st</sup>, we will host a 5pm VIGIL Mass with the usual 8:30am Mass on Tuesday, January 1<sup>st</sup>, in honor of Mary, Mother of God. Superlative or modest, enjoy your celebrations by which you will welcome 2019 and remember, even with the date change, you are loved.  
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