



ST. GABRIEL CHURCH

January, 2018

Dear School Parents,

The weekend between Christmas and New Year is always called "Holy Family Sunday." Now that the newlyweds, Joseph and Mary, have their newborn, this Sunday is always built on the continuation of the Christmas story gospels, as well as the first 2 readings being of the family value nature: Children should...parents should...husbands should...wives should...Especially humorous or controversial here is one of St. Paul's letters: Wives be submissive to your husbands! It is that weekend.

To that end, as part of my sermon, I read a paragraph from another priest/author who wrote in a book called: "Celebrating Sunday for Catholic Families." Here is that paragraph (slightly edited):

We can look to Joseph and Mary as parents who took the time to observe the practices that were essential to their faith. Passing on the faith to their child was important to the Holy Family. Often today, parents feel too busy to take their children to Mass or teach them their prayers. But Mary and Joseph did not take a break from their routine to practice their Jewish faith, it was an essential part of their routine.

I thought this priest made an excellent point for families in St. Gabriel Parish today. So, how does your family stack up with the above criteria as to being a "holy family?" Every family of Roman Catholics is called to be a "holy family," not just Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Do our school families make practicing their Catholic faith an essential part of their typical weekend routine? Unfortunately, it would appear that the great majority do not. If "Keep Holy the Sabbath" means that you should be in church 52 times a year, plus a couple of Holy Days that might not fall on a weekend like Christmas, New Year, the Assumption, then we all should be in church about 55 times per year. For a few weekends in a row, Fr. Rich and I counted the number of school families we could see attending Masses on the weekend. We concluded about 15 school families were there on a typical weekend. It wasn't a well-balanced rotation either, it was made up of about the same 20 families over and over again. Unfortunately, Mr. Adams tells me that there are about 128 school families! Admittedly several families in the school are not Catholic and if they are not choosing to come here for church, I hope that they are going somewhere. I have no idea though.

My Conclusion: we need to see a huge improvement here. Teaching your children to totally ignore any or all of the 10 Commandments, like this one for instance, is HORRIBLE Catholic

