

St. John Vianney Church

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Fr. Biju Kannampuzha, C.M.I., Pastor - 102

Fr. Jose Koluthara, C.M.I., Associate Pastor - 106

Fr. Saji Thomas, C.M.I., Associate Pastor - 108

Karen Price, Parish Secretary - 101

Bernadette Brock, Youth Minister - 104 Marilyn Reesor, Music Director - 121



Feast of the Holy Family



Sunday
December 27th

9:30: † Tina Rashid
Requested by: Rashid Family

Wednesday
January 30th

7:00 pm † Loretta Wilson
Requested by: Jim & Phyl Taylor



Solemnity of the Holy Family

It's the duty of Catholic parents to hand on the faith to their children. The parents are expected to be their children's primary religion teachers or catechists. Yes, religious education programs, Catholic schools, youth groups, and even clergy have an important role to play. But they're supporting roles, at best. They're meant to reinforce what parents have taught. Because it's within the family that faith should really be passed on.

Today we're given the example of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph- the Holy Family. They had gone to the great Jewish Temple in Jerusalem for the feast of Passover. We're told they did this every year, as was the custom. The point here is that Mary and Joseph, as parents, did their religious duty as a family. On this particular occasion, Jesus remained behind and astonished the Jewish religious leaders with his knowledge. We can be sure that he came by this knowledge through the religious upbringing of his parents.

Many parents these days, however, don't introduce their children to religion. They say they want their kids to grow up and make their own choices. Unfortunately, most children raised this way grow up and choose to have no religion at all. Consider today's college students. It used to be that students would arrive on campus eager to explore deep questions about faith, the meaning of life, and right from wrong. But no longer. Because students these days haven't been exposed to religion, they don't know what questions to ask. They don't have tools to explore with. So they focus instead on preparing for a career and getting a job. They don't bother with God, because no one bothered to introduce them to God in the first place. What's the lesson here? If we want our children to grow up to have faith, we have to pass the faith on to them while they're children. And that's a parents' job. Anyone or anything else is just a poor substitute.

As parents, we want our kids to be educated, well-rounded, and sociable. So we help them with schoolwork, sign them up for sports and activities, arrange for playdates. Which is all good! But more than anything else, parents need to make it a priority to pass on their faith to their kids. If they want to be really effective, they need to take a team approach. Two religious parents have a much higher success rate than

only one. And it's especially important that dads be on board. For whatever reason, kids with non-religious fathers are far less likely to become religious adults than kids with non-religious moms.

If you're a parent with children at home, take your kids to Mass, teach them to pray. Take them to confession. Place religious images in your home. Share what your faith means to you. Read the Bible with them, and lives of the saints. Get involved in the parish, so it's a major focus of family life. Let your kids see you give generously to the needy, and the church. Always speak positively about the church, even when it frustrates you. Teach them right from wrong as God reveals it through the church, not as the world teaches through the media. And make it a point to develop your own faith life. Because you can't pass on to your kids, what you don't have yourself.

What if you're a parent with grown children who no longer practice their faith, or may have switched their allegiance to another religious group? Don't beat yourself up. They're adults and can make their own decisions. Those decisions are their responsibility, not yours. Don't despair either; adult kids can change their minds. An indifferent 20 year-old today can become a pillar of the church later in life. And don't forget the witness of St. Monica, who for years prayed daily for her wayward son Augustine, who finally returned to the faith, and ultimately became a saint.

Grandparents have a role to play as well. If your adult children aren't raising your grandkids with faith, there's much you can do. It's for good reason that Pope John Paul II called grandparents "evangelists!" First of all, encourage- but don't nag- your kids to have their children baptized, receive First Holy Communion, be Confirmed. If they don't object, you yourself can take them to Mass. Let them see your faith in action. Buy them religious books and items. Even if they aren't received with excitement at the time, God can use them for his purposes.

No one said that raising kids to have faith was easy. You may remember the story of the seven-year old in Utah who took off in his parents' car one Sunday morning, because he didn't want to go to church. And I'll admit, even the best churches can seem boring at times. I'm also aware that the efforts of some parents are counter-productive. Maybe their actions don't match their words, and their kids conclude that religion's for hypocrites. Or maybe the image of God they tried to pass on was one of fear and judgment, not love and mercy. But this shouldn't discourage us! Instead, it should make us more determined to do our best. Two days ago, excited children opened Christmas gifts which they'll cherish and treasure. But there's no greater treasure we can pass on to them, than the gift of faith.



**PRAYER OF POPE FRANCIS FOR
THE JUBILEE OF MERCY**

Lord Jesus Christ, you have taught us to be merciful like the heavenly Father, and have told us that whoever sees you sees Him. Show us your face and we will be saved. Your loving gaze freed Zacchaeus and Matthew from being enslaved by money; the adulteress and Magdalene from seeking happiness only in created things; made Peter weep after his betrayal, and assured Paradise to the repentant thief. Let us hear, as if addressed to each one of us, the words that you spoke to the Samaritan woman: "If you knew the gift of God!"

You are the visible face of the invisible Father, of the God who manifests his power above all by forgiveness and mercy: let the Church be your visible face in the world, its Lord risen and glorified. You willed that your ministers would also be clothed in weakness in order that they may feel compassion for those in ignorance and error: let everyone who approaches them feel sought after, loved, and forgiven by God. Send your Spirit and consecrate every one of us with its anointing, so that the Jubilee of Mercy may be a year of grace from the Lord, and your Church, with renewed enthusiasm, may bring good news to the poor, proclaim liberty to captives and the oppressed, and restore sight to the blind. We ask this of you, Lord Jesus, through the intercession of Mary, Mother of Mercy; you who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen.



**The Parish Office will be closed on
Dec. 28th & Jan. 1st**



OFFERTORY ENVELOPES

2016 envelopes are available in the hall this weekend. Be sure to write your name & address on envelopes for the first few weeks of 2016 as an additional means of confirming your contact information. **Also, please destroy any envelopes from 2015 or previous years.** It is possible that someone else has your number in 2016 and this would cause considerable confusion at receipt time. Please write the donation amount on your envelope, it would be extremely helpful to the counters. If you are not currently using donation envelopes, please consider using them or signing up for a monthly preauthorized giving plan. Both of these methods provide income stability to your parish, as well as guaranteeing that you receive a valuable tax receipt each year. Those of you who use weekly envelopes or sign up for a monthly preauthorized giving plan can also rent the parish hall at a subsidized rate. When picking up your 2016 envelopes, please ensure that you fill out the card that is sticking out of the box with your full name(s), address, and telephone number (keeping in mind that more than one person may have the same surname). For those parishioners who use Pre-Authorized giving - there are boxes of envelopes available to you that contain only the Archdiocesan special collection envelopes. Please ask for the special Pre-Authorized Giving envelopes when picking up your envelopes. **Thank you for your continued support!**



The St. John Vianney - St. Vincent de Paul Society, would like to extend a sincere thank you to all of our Parishioners. Your response to our Angel Gift Giving Tree was truly amazing. Our Christmas party was a huge success with 115 of our children in attendance. This was our best year yet! It was a very fun filled and busy day which concluded with a visit from Santa. The children were thrilled to see him and receive their special gift. Thank you again so much, you've helped brighten the Christmas of so many of our children. God bless you and Merry Christmas! *The Members of Your St. Vincent de Paul Society.*



Please pray for those who are sick:
**Lillian Pottage, Michael Foster,
Herman Jacobs, Geraldine Ocsai,
Baby Avery Maset, & Carson Batters.**
And for those who have died:
† Ed Arsenault



Thurs. December 31st
New Year's Eve 5:00 p.m.,
Fri. January 1st
New Year's Day
9:30 am & 11:30 am
(Mary, the Mother of God - Holy Day of Obligation)



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