**FOR THE WEEKEND OF DEC. 28-29, 2024**

Fifth Sunday: Feast of the Holy Family

**Gospel Reading**

Lk 2:41-52

Each year his parents went to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, and when he was twelve years old, they went up according to festival custom. After they had completed its days, as they were returning, the boy Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Thinking that he was in the caravan, they journeyed for a day and looked for him among their relatives and acquaintances, but not finding him, they returned to Jerusalem to look for him.

After three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions, and all who heard him were astounded at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him, they were astonished, and his mother said to him, “Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been looking for you with great anxiety.”

And he said to them, “Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?”

But they did not understand what he said to them. He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus advanced [in] wisdom and age and favor before God and man.

**Intercession**

May we grow in wisdom and favor with God, through prayer, service, sacrifice, and support of mission-building efforts like the *Catholic Ministry Appeal*.

**Copy for Bulletin Announcement**

When Joseph and Mary discover Jesus in the Temple after three days of frantic searching, they are confused by his matter-of-fact response: “Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?” In contrast to Mary and Joseph, who “...did not understand what he said to them,” Jesus, at the very young age of 12, fully comprehends his mission.

Jesus is at home in the Temple. As he sits amongst his elders and listens to their exchanges, he is comfortable enough to ask questions and share his perspective. He fully engages. He doesn’t just sit on the sidelines as an observer. Even as a child, Jesus is a person of action, and his time in the Temple gives us a clue to what his future ministry will be like. To be his disciple is to be active, to serve others, to talk openly about God the Father and our relationships with Him, to question, to bring as many people the Father’s house as we can.

How do we do this today? By inviting those who have left the Church to Mass. By modeling a commitment to prayer and service to our children. And by supporting programs that build up the Kingdom of God here on earth, like giving to the *Catholic Ministry Appeal*.

**Copy for Pulpit Announcement**

“Home” is often associated with family, comfort, care, acceptance, warmth, and joy. We can have many “homes” in our lives. There’s the house in which we grew up; the classrooms where we learned how to read, write essays, and solve chemical equations; the apartments that were our first homes. We can feel at home with our work family and the organizations we belong to and our parish. God wants us to find a home in Him. His Church, the “Father’s house” Jesus spoke of in today’s Gospel, is a place of rest, a haven in our sometimes-turbulent lives. God’s house – the Church – is both the physical buildings in which we worship and a community of believers who to work to carry out Christ’s ministry today. Through the *Catholic Ministry Appeal*, we have an opportunity to support and strengthen God’s house and advance His kingdom on earth. Please prayerfully consider giving to the *Catholic Ministry Appeal*.

**Social Media Post/Content**

Photo: Image of a church

Header: “I must be in my Father’s house” – Luke 2:49

Copy: Just as Jesus was at home in the Temple, may we feel at home in God’s Church. A gift to the *Catholic Ministry Appeal* helps strengthen God’s house of worship. Please consider a gift.