

Fr. Romeo Evangelista's Homily  
December 29, 2019  
Feast of the Holy Family (A)

As we celebrate the Feast of the Holy Family, let us remember that for most of us, the family is the most endearing community of all. We are bound together not only by relations of blood. We are bound even more by those memorable moments when we experienced joy, laughter, and support. We become more connected, too, when we share in life's trials and tribulations.

It is consoling to find that this was also the experience of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. The unspeakable struggles of faith that preceded the birth of Jesus produced intimacy and trust. The birth of Jesus has given hope and continued enlightenment about their missions. Herod's plot against Jesus, sending them to temporary exile, made them suffer the fate of refugees. All those experiences cemented the spiritual, physical, and emotional bond of the Holy Family.

Today we are realistic in admitting that families are imperfect. The ideal picture rarely materializes. Most parents have really no training in becoming good parents and so they make mistakes. Children, expected to grow to fruitful maturity, turn out as disappointments and lose track of the direction of their lives. Much of the sadness and gloom in people's hearts can be traced to wounds inflicted in the home. We cannot put the blame on the family itself, for no person in their right mind entering into family life, envisioned bad things for the future of their home. In many ways, families, too, are victims of society, media, and the economic situations around them.

Christmas comes every year to bring hope to families. Jesus desires to be part of all families today. He knows too well the problems that beset families. He knows the joys and laughter, the pains and problems of every family. He comes to bring peace and healing, reconciliation and unity. We should let God be a part of our families. Allow Him to direct and guide our lives.

The reality is that, there are always problems, conflicts in the families. By allowing God to be part of these things, I believe He will surely guide us to a better path. At times we are tempted to question whether we can still see hope for our families. There are always opportunities given to us to renew our relationships and strengthen links with each other. Maybe not all families will find themselves united again as in the beginning. But at least,

forgiveness, acceptance, and courage can flow to inspire the lives of people to change what can be changed and to prepare for the future with much confidence. As I've said, some families may be impossible to be united again, but at least we can chose to forgive one another.

The Gospel says that Joseph "dressed" several times about God's message for his family. Let us not stop dreaming for our families. Let us continue believing that God desires only the best for us. God can right our many wrongs if we put our trust in Him and if we open our families to Him. May the Christ Child find a welcome space in our homes this time and always. Amen.