

## HOLY FAMILY - C

"Time sure flies when you're having fun!" Isn't that how the saying goes?

Yesterday we celebrated the birth of Jesus and contemplated him lying in the manger ...

... and today our Gospel whisks us forward twelve years to an event in the life of the pre-teenage Jesus and his family.

And what an event!

A terrible fear in the mind of any parent: your child has gotten lost!

This story is found only in the Gospel according to Luke who is traditionally believed to have received his information about the birth and childhood of Jesus directly from Mary.

You can imagine how distraught Mary and Joseph would have been after three days of searching for their young son.

Finally they go to the Temple where their trip to Jerusalem had first taken them.

And there is Jesus "sitting in the midst of the teachers."

We are told that Mary and Joseph were astonished.

Indeed, Mary expresses their great anxiety in their search for Jesus and ask him why he had done this to them ... a question I imagine every parent has at least once thought in their minds.

There is something very special worth noting about the response Jesus makes: These are the first recorded words spoken by Jesus.

"Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?"

Luke is revealing that even at this young age, Jesus knows who he is and what his mission is in this world.

He is the incarnate Son of God and must be about his Father's business of proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom.

We are then told that Jesus returns home with Mary and Joseph and is obedient to them.

Obedience is the hallmark of who Jesus is.

You and I often have a hard time with obedience.

We can also have a hard time with the compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience St. Paul tells us we should be clothed in as disciples of Jesus.

And over all these virtues, we are told to "put on love, the bond of perfection."

Beautiful words as we contemplate the Holy Family, but our personal families as well as the human family and the family of the Church are bit messier, or at least more complicated.

Let us pray for the graces we need to want to be more like the Holy Family, especially more like Jesus who "had to be" in his Father's house, busy about his heavenly Father's business.