



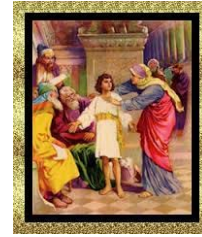
The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

December 27, 2015



*His parents found Jesus sitting
in the midst of the teachers.*

—Luke 2:46



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Pastor's Column

Children in Church at St. Thomas More Parish

I thought it appropriate that I discuss the place of families with children here at our Parish on this "Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph."

Pope Francis said this on December 17, 2015, at St. Joseph Parish in Rome:

"Babies cry, make noise, go here and there. But it annoys me when a baby cries in Church and there are those who say he needs to go out.

The cry of a baby is God's voice: never drive them away from the Church."

These words sum up in the best way possible our policies regarding children in Church. Children are always welcome! That is why we did not include a "Children's Chapel" or "Cry Room" in our Church.

Families with children are always welcome to be together and to worship together.

If children "act up" a bit, parents know and feel comfortable to get up from their places and walk to the back and walk around with the child(ren). Also if they need, they can always walk outside on the Plaza where there are speakers and Mass can be heard and also seen through the glass doors.

In addition, a new option for parents will be available, if they so choose. We are creating a "Child Care Center" called "The Ark" where children can be while parents attend Mass. The Ark will be designated for children from 0 to 3 years old.

Lia Keane has been hired to be our Child Care Coordinator.

We should be operational in a month or so, and this option will be available for the 10:30am Mass on Sundays.

The Ark will also be available when needed for other Parish events.

Also it is good to remember that in our Faith Formation Program we have Genesis for our 3 to 5 year olds. This instruction takes place during the 10:30am Mass.

Also that we are now in our new Church Home, we will be able to offer "Liturgy of the Word for Children" on a much more consistent basis. This instruction is for children from ages four to twelve. The children leave Mass after the Collect (Opening Prayer) and return by the time the Preparation of the Gifts begins.

So we have a number of options to help families with children.

The bottom line, though, is children are always welcome at St. Thomas More Parish.

Fr. Mike