



Month: January: The Christmas Season- From Christmas to Epiphany

We return to Ordinary Time on Sunday, January 12, 2015. But before Ordinary Time begins again, we celebrate Epiphany (this year, on January 6th) the twelfth day after Christmas. Epiphany celebrates the visit of the three kings or wise men to the Christ Child.

Theme: Family

We celebrate the Feast of the Holy Family the Sunday after Christmas. This feast was established by Pope Leo XIII to instill into families something of the faithful love and devotion attachment that characterizes the family of Nazareth. The Holy Family is a model and example of all Christian families. In 1870, Pope Pius IX proclaimed Saint Joseph, the foster father of Jesus, Patron of the Catholic Church. On this Holy Family Sunday, try cooking a meal together as a family. Consider cooking a traditional Lebanese meal such as kibbi, a specially ground meat mixed with spices and cracked wheat. This is the same kind of food that Mary served Jesus and St. Joseph.

Sacrament: Confirmation (continued)

The special grace we receive at Confirmation allows us to see more clearly the responsibility to Christ for our neighbor. We become more concerned with the welfare of Christ-in-the-world-which is the Church-and the welfare of Christ-in-our-neighbor. Confirmation is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, who gives us the gifts to live and share our faith with others. The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are wisdom, understanding, counsel, courage, knowledge, piety and fear of the Lord. With this special grace, we go forth and proclaim to others that Christ lives, and He lives in us.

Family Activity: A New Year's Family Penance Service

The week after Christmas provides a great opportunity to get ready for the new year. This means reflecting upon the past year and setting some goals and resolutions for the coming year. Light a candle at your family Prayer Center and gather the family in a circle around the table. Have each family member ask forgiveness for the times they have hurt another family member. When everyone has had a turn to speak, offer this prayer together:

"Father, forgive us for the many times we have hurt each other. Help us to know the meaning of forgiveness. We know so well each other's faults, but we know just as well how to forgive and how to be forgiven. We promise before you and before each other to grow in holiness and in love within our family. Give us the courage and the strength to continue on in that love which we know to be supportive and understanding. Amen."

Saint Information: St. of the Month: St. Thomas Aquinas. Feast Day January 28th.

St. Thomas Aquinas was a great teacher of the Catholic faith, he is the patron saint of Catholic schools and students.