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FROM THE DESK OF FATHER JONATHAN

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As we prepared last week for Christmas at the parish, several times I stopped and reflected on how Mary and Joseph might have prepared for big events in their family. The fact that they were the Holy Family didn't mean they didn't have to cook, prepare the house, send invitations, or even decide which side of the family they would spend time with.

Their holiness didn't mean they were free from the difficulties we all encounter around the holidays. In fact, perhaps it was even harder for them to live holy days when all around them they saw people living the season with great superficiality. I can picture Mary having conversations with neighbors who didn't know or accept the fact that the Messiah was living right next door! I can picture Jesus having to deal with friends or co-workers who rushed around to get ready for high holy days, all while still making fun of him for his very non-traditional family, with all of the questions and rumors that plagued him about the origin of his step-son and the "questionable character" of his wife as a single mother, now with Joseph.

I picture, however, Mary and Joseph living these holy days with deep reflection and peace, despite what was happening around them. They surely knew what was most important was not what other people thought, did, or said. They focused on what would last!

We can do that too! Christmas for Christians is just beginning.

Look to Mary! Look to Joseph! Look to Jesus! They will teach us how to live these holy days!

God bless, Father Jonathan