



January 5, 2016

Last week on the feast of the Holy Family, the Gospel related the story of Mary and Joseph bringing Jesus to the temple when Jesus was about twelve years old. When they were returning home, they presumed Jesus was with the other boys in the caravan, but at the end of the day when they gathered as families again they noticed Jesus was not in the group. So Mary and Joseph headed back to Jerusalem, worried that something might have happened to him. They searched for him for three days.

My reflection books made me aware of things I had never really considered. I was asked to consider how a parent feels when they recognize that their child is missing; even five minutes of searching can seem like an eternity. Mary and Joseph searched for **three days**; that would mean probably at least two sleepless nights. How much torture and agony they must have felt wondering what had happened to Jesus, the son of God? Another interesting idea is when they find him, Jesus does not seem to understand why they were looking for him. Of course, the story says he was twelve years old. He probably thought he was old enough to be on his own. Those of you who have children soon to be teenagers probably have had experiences something like that. They don't want to be treated as children.

I encourage you to take some time to reflect on how Mary and Joseph felt as they searched for Jesus. Then think about what Jesus does when he realizes the agony that he had caused his parents, he returns home and is obedient to them. Also, take a moment to consider how God, our loving Father, feels when we walk away from Him thinking we don't need him anymore. Take some time to talk to God if any of these ideas strike you.

God bless you, and have a Happy New Year!

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