

“Families & the Gospel”

Bud Ozar and his wife Sue are working in Kenya rescuing orphans from the street. In appreciation for the use of these blurbs, if you wish you may donate directly to this project by going to: www.friendsofkenyanorphans.org.

CYCLE C THE YEAR OF LUKE

ADVENT

First Sunday of Advent

A Family Perspective

by Bud Ozar

At this time of the year we are very conscious of our family as we make preparations for Christmas. Today's gospel warns us not to be consumed by all the consumer activity. This Advent appreciate the gift of people in your life. The best gift this season might be your appreciation of others.

Second Sunday of Advent

A Family Perspective

by Bud Ozar

Today's gospel shows John the Baptist and parents have similar vocations. Like the Baptist, parents are asked to make "rough ways smooth" and to "prepare the way of the Lord" for their families. This Advent ask: "Does my life hinder or help my family to know Jesus?"

Third Sunday of Advent

A Family Perspective

by Bud Ozar

Today's gospel tells us to SHARE! This Christmas resist the pressure to give token gifts. Instead, use those funds to give NECESSITIES to the poor. If our impoverished brothers and sisters are not on our gift list, we've missed the point of Christmas.

Fourth Sunday of Advent

A Family Perspective

by Bud Ozar

Mary was excited about her first pregnancy and rushed to tell her cousin. Sadly children are often seen as a liability, "another mouth to feed" or an "obstacle to my career." It is said "Christmas is for children." It is more accurate to say "Christmas is for adults to appreciate the gift of children!"

CHRISTMAS TIME

Christmas

A Family Perspective

by Bud Ozar

Today's gospel reminds us God chose to enter human history in a family. By Divine design the salvation of the world began in a family. Family was the best God the Creator could do for his Beloved Son. Jesus was our first Christmas gift.

Holy Family

A Family Perspective

by Bud Ozar

Today's gospel contains this truth about parenting: "but his parents did not know." One of the reasons parenting is so difficult is because our children don't tell us everything. If the Holy Family had trouble with their teenager, why do we think it will be easier for us?

Mary, Mother of God

A Family Perspective

by Bud Ozar

The gospel tells us "Mary kept all these things, pondering them in her heart." We would do well to imitate Mary in our New Year's resolution. Instead of criticizing let's "keep it in our hearts." Criticism isn't productive or well received anyway!

Epiphany

A Family Perspective

by Bud Ozar

After meeting Jesus, the Magi returned home by "another way." What in your family needs to be done "another way?" Do you need "another way to resolve differences, to communicate or show affection? This is a new year, time to change what isn't working. Take a tip from some wise men, there's always "another way."

Baptism of our Lord

1st Sunday of Ordinary Time

A Family Perspective

by Bud Ozar

In today's gospel Jesus was publicly AFFIRMED by his Father: "You are my beloved son, with you I am very pleased." As parents we can become so focused on misbehaviors we overlook the good behaviors. Jesus needed AFFIRMATION and so do our children.

LENT

First Sunday of Lent

A Family Perspective

by Bud Ozar

Jesus "was led by the Spirit in the wilderness." What is the wilderness in your life to which the Holy Spirit is leading you this Lent? Perhaps there are uncharted areas in your marriage or family relationships. Spend this Lent in your "wilderness" with God work. Where is the Spirit leading you this Lent?

Second Sunday of Lent

A Family Perspective

by Bud Ozar

Jesus "went up the mountain to pray" and he was "changed." Prayer has the power to change us. This Lent set aside a few minutes each day to pray for members of your family. Pray before each meal and if you are married, spend five minutes in prayer together.

Third Sunday of Lent

A Family Perspective

by Bud Ozar

The owner of the fig tree was impatient because the tree did not live up to his expectations. In families there are those who don't live up to our expectations. Imitate the gardener and give them more time and help. Don't cut them out of your life. Love asks us to be connected, not productive.

Fourth Sunday of Lent

A Family Perspective

by Bud Ozar

We may feel like the Prodigal Son but the gospel wants us to focus on the father who was forgiving and understanding. We all make mistakes and need forgiveness. Who in your family needs your forgiveness and acceptance this Lent?

Fifth Sunday of Lent

A Family Perspective

by Bud Ozar

Stoning is not just an ancient act of violence. Each day in our homes we throw stones of ridicule, criticism, name-calling and put-downs. All of it is deadly. Hear Jesus in today's gospel: "Whoever is without sin can throw the first stone." Rid your home of violence. Stop verbal stoning!

Passion (Palm) Sunday

A Family Perspective

by Bud Ozar

Today Jesus tells us "I am among you as one who serves." In accepting the palm branch today you publicly confirm your baptismal promise to follow Jesus as "one who serves." Selfless service defines a family as Christian.

EASTER TIME

Easter Sunday

A Family Perspective

by Bud Ozar

Millions of Christians around the world celebrate the Resurrection today. It all began simply on the first Easter with one person telling another: "Mary told Peter" and "they believed." Faith is passed one person to another; it is caught, not taught and parents are the most effective persons to pass faith to their children.

Second Sunday of Easter

Divine Mercy Sunday

A Family Perspective

by Bud Ozar

Jesus connects PEACE and FORGIVENESS in today's gospel. In our families we will only experience peace to the extent we forgive one another. Peace is purchased with the currency of forgiveness. When we allow our anger and pride to lock out others, we also lock out peace and harmony.

Third Sunday of Easter**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Jesus invited the disciples to “Come and have breakfast.” At this beach breakfast and the Last Supper Jesus teaches us meals should be more than eating. Family meals are opportunities to share prayer, listen to each other’s stories, understand and support one another.

Fourth Sunday of Easter**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Today’s gospel reminds us to be shepherds for our children who depend on us to be their guides and role models. Where are we leading them? When they “hear our voice” what message do they hear?

Fifth Sunday of Easter**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

In today’s gospel Jesus tells us: “Love one another.” Love holds a family together. It is not what a family *does* which makes it outstanding, rather it is what is *has*, love for one another.

Sixth Sunday of Easter**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Today Jesus gives this advice: “Do not let your hearts be troubled.” Worry and anxiety can consume our lives preventing us from seeing the love which surrounds us and binds us to one another. Don’t miss the forest for the trees. We are living today what we worried about yesterday.

Seventh Sunday of Easter**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

In today’s gospel Jesus speaks of unity, not uniformity. With uniformity everything is the same. Unity requires recognition and reconciliation of differences. How do you reconcile differences in your home? Do you listen respectfully or do you try to manipulate or impose your opinion? The seeds of unity and division are in every family. What we sow, we reap. What is your family harvest?

Pentecost Sunday (John 14: 15-16, 23-26)**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Today’s gospel tells us God actually wants to take up residence in your family, “We will come and make our home with you.” Every family is called to be a tabernacle where God dwells. Is Jesus a permanent member of your family or a temporary guest? Today the promise is given. The choice is ours.

First Sunday after Pentecost**Trinity Sunday****A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

The words of Jesus in today’s gospel, “I have many things to say to you, but you cannot hear them now.” could have been said by any parent. It can be frustrating because our desire to guide is often misinterpreted or poorly received. We cannot program our children. We can only teach, lead and trust the Spirit of truth will guide them.

Body & Blood of Christ**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

In today’s gospel Jesus teaches we will find abundance by sharing the little we have. No matter how little time, money or food we have, it is enough to share.

ORDINARY TIME**Baptism of our Lord****1st Sunday of Ordinary Time****A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Jesus was a young man and his Father affirmed him in front of a huge crowd saying “You are my beloved son; with you I am very pleased.” Our children are never too old to appreciate our praise.

Second Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

At Cana we get a good insight into Mary’s parenting style. She did not plead, argue, demand or manipulate. She merely pointed out the situation and trusted her son would make the best decision.

Third Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

In today's gospel Jesus was "praised by all" except at home in Nazareth where the "eyes of all were intently on him." Acceptance can be hard to find at home due to unreal EXPECTATIONS. Jesus challenges us to "proclaim liberty" to anyone "oppressed" or "captive" by our EXPECTATIONS.

Fourth Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Mary and Joseph must have been proud when their village "all spoke well of Jesus and were amazed at his words." But they probably felt shame when the same people drove him out of town. Like Mary and Joseph, the highs and lows of parenting are our path to being a Holy Family.

Fifth Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

In today's gospel Jesus asked Simon to start by "going a short distance." Later he asked Simon to "go into deeper water." The first step toward reconciliation is usually a "short distance" which gives us the courage to further "into deeper water." Reconciliation starts with the first short step!

Sixth Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Don't look very far when you hear today's gospel speak of poverty, hunger, sorrow or exclusion. These things happen in families. Children feel "insulted" when they are constantly criticized. Spouses "hunger" for affection. Grandparents feel "excluded" by divorce and custody decisions. Parents "weep" because they feel alienated from their children.

Seventh Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

In studying the effects of religion upon family relationships, researchers inform us hostility and prayer can't coexist. You cannot be hostile toward someone for whom you are praying. Today's gospel encourages us: "Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who treat you badly."

Eighth Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Today Jesus tells us: "Why do you see the speck in someone else's eye but miss the log in your own eye?" It's always easier to try to change someone else than face the things in ourselves which need change. What a waste of time for we can't change anyone but ourselves.

Ninth Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Our Catholic Tradition is full of stories of miraculous cures and the story in today's gospel is one of the first. In the cure of the servant Jesus wasn't even physically present. The faith in Jesus by the centurion bridged that gap and the servant was healed. Healing continues and still depends on our faith.

Tenth Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

The widow in today's gospel was in deep trouble. Her husband and her only son were dead. In that male dominated society woman owned nothing and were totally dependent on men for their livelihood. She would be reduced to begging. Restoring her son to life, Jesus also restored the woman to life.

11th Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Jesus sat down for a meal and was caught between the weeping woman and the indignant pharisee. Why is it tough issues always pop up at meals? No wonder we need antacids. Jesus focused on the positives, offering forgiveness to the woman and understanding to the pharisee.

12th Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Today's gospel teaches personal sacrifice is the key to successful parenting. If we try to "save your life you will lose it." The more we give of our self, the more rewarding is our relationship with our children. That's the secret: the more you give, the more you get.

13th Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Today's gospel reminds us once we set our "hand to the plow" of parenting and marriage, "we cannot look back." This is what commitment means: we have said YES to what was, what is and to what can be.

14th Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Just like the seventy two disciples sent out by Jesus in today's gospel, families are expected to be MISSIONARIES. By our lives, words and life style we proclaim peace, commitment, fidelity and respect to a culture caught up with violence and gratification.

15th Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Children learn by watching us. Do they see you helping others like the Good Samaritan, or do they see you avoiding others like the Levite in today's gospel. Worry more about what your children see in YOUR LIFE than what they see on TV.

16th Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Cell phones, emails, faxes, texts and voice mails can reduce our lives to a continual series of interrupted moments. Listen to Jesus in today's gospel: "You are anxious about many things" robbing us of the precious time needed to BE with others. Quality time is QUANTITY time.

17th Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Today's gospel guarantees if we "ask" we will "receive," perhaps not what we wanted but what our Heavenly Father knows is best for us, His children. All the love we have for our children, God has for us and more. As our children trust us, we must trust "Our Father."

18th Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

In today's gospel Jesus teaches us: "One's life does not consist of possessions." We spend so much time working to obtain more stuff; we don't have time for the people in our lives. What is enough? Are the words of Jesus, "You fool", meant for us?

19th Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

In today's gospel a servant WAITED for the master to return. Waiting is a normal part of family life. We wait for a child's birth, then for small legs to catch up. Later we wait for teenagers to return home safely. Finally we wait alone anticipating a call or visit from an adult child. Waiting is sacred time, for even in the waiting we are connected.

20th Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Today Jesus warns us his Word will create conflict between parents and children. In a permissive society which advocates individualism and consumerism, parents must continue to teach and live the gospel values of respect, service to others, forgiveness, generosity and compassion. A Christian family is a countercultural family.

21st Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

The phrase in today's gospel, "I don't know where you come from," is often used by parents about children and children about parents. Change is so rapid one generation has little in common with another We depend on love, trust, and mutual respect to bridge this gap.

22nd Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Family life well lived confirms the words of Jesus in today's gospel, "Those who humble themselves will be exalted." Commitment, intimacy, loyalty and love are the rewards of humble service and care for one another.

23rd Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Today's gospel is clear: commitment to another involves sacrifice. Before we accept a commitment such as marriage or parenting, we must plan carefully like the king in today's gospel. These are serious commitments which demand complete self-giving and are not for the faint hearted or selfish.

24th Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Parents are like that shepherd in today's gospel for they don't give up and can't rest if one of their children has wandered away. A parent's persistent love provides a glimpse of the unconditional love for each of us by God, Our Father. A parent is a window to the Divine.

25th Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Despite all our time saving gadgets, we still have less leisure and family time. To solve this we created the Myth of Quality Time. Don't be fooled: Quality Time is Quantity Time. Jesus counsels us today, we "cannot serve two masters" and expect to be happy. Dedicate time to your family. No one in their final hours regretted not spending more time at work.

26th Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

In today's gospel the rich man died and was condemned to "a place of torment" because he ignored the poor. He asked Lazarus to go and warn his five brothers to change their ways. Evidently ignoring the poor was a family pattern. Is your family sensitive to the poor?

27th Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Faith is one of those things we just can't get enough of! In today's gospel the apostles asked Jesus to "Increase our faith." It is faith in ourselves, our spouse, our children and our parents which equips us to overlook annoyances helps us to forgive and urges us to ask forgiveness. "Lord, increase our faith!"

28th Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Everyone needs "A Round Tuit." The lepers in today's gospel probably meant to thank Jesus. Excited about being cured they didn't get 'around-to-it.' We get caught up in our own interests and fail to appreciate what we have or to say what is in our hearts. This week get yourself a "Round Tuit."

29th Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

The widow in today's gospel is praised for her PERSEVERANCE. In our homes perseverance is a critical ingredient to resolving differences and teaching lessons and skills to children. Perseverance is always an act of faith in the goodness of the other person.

30th Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Listen to Jesus in today's gospel: "who humbles himself will be exalted." It is not the occasional big events, but the daily humble routine of family life which creates bonds and relationships which last a lifetime.

31st Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Jesus is saying to you what he said to Zacchaeus, "I must stay at your house today." It doesn't matter if In today's gospel Jesus "intended to pass through Jericho to another town." In families we sometimes stop at the wrong places. It is wisdom to "pass through" annoying family situations so we can enjoy the goodness of each other.

32nd Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

The question of the Sadducees to Jesus is framed in a story about a family with seven brothers and their sister-in-law. Through story telling families remember their shared past and expose the companionship of God in your family from generation to generation.

33rd Sunday**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

So many conflicting voices and influences make parenting difficult. In today's gospel Jesus encourages parents to bravely "give testimony" and trust He will give us the "wisdom" to be good parents. You are not alone in parenting; a loving Father is standing with you.

RELIGIOUS FEAST DAYS**Transfiguration****A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

At the Transfiguration the disciples saw a different side of Jesus. All of us have 'another side' which we reveal only to those we trust. A family is the sacred place where we can be transfigured to be our truest self.

Christ the King**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Today's gospel reminds us the Kingdom of Heaven is not like Disney's Magic Kingdom. Admission to Christ's Kingdom is paid with the currency of acceptance, forgiveness, attention to the poor and love of one's enemy.

Ascension**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Jesus tells us today, "you are my witnesses" and guarantees the "promise of the Father" to "clothe us with the power to accomplish this mission. It is not worldly power which dominates and manipulates. It is the power of the Kingdom of God to live in peace, forgiveness, compassion, service to others, love of enemies and care for the poor and defenseless.

The Assumption**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

"Blessed is the fruit of your womb" can be said of all mothers, because every child is "blessed" and a child of God upon whom God "looks with favor." This is our deepest identity and destiny. We do not earn this blessing. God's love is a free gift to each of us.

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS: If these holidays fall on or near a weekend, then the following articles might be used on that weekend.

Mother's Day**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Mother's Day gives us the opportunity to celebrate the unconditional love of mothers. Whether living or dead, a mother's love always invites us to follow her example by loving generously and selflessly.

Memorial Day**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

On this Memorial Day Weekend we remember those who have died. Will you be remembered as someone who was aware of God's presence and shared this insight with others? In families our greatest possessions are the beliefs we share from one generation to the next.

Father's Day**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Today we give thanks for our dads. In teaching us, healing our wounds and providing for us, our dads participate in the teaching, healing and feeding ministry of Jesus. In their generosity, God is made present.

July 4th**A Family Perspective****by Bud Ozar**

Our nation is blessed with so many opportunities our lives are often frenzied as we try to take advantage of all the possibilities. As we celebrate our Independence this weekend, perhaps we need to be aware of our dependence on fashion, fad and cultural pressure to consume.

Labor Day

A Family Perspective

by Bud Ozar

Labor Day we celebrate our ability to respond to the challenge of Genesis. Our labor an opportunity to enter into partnership with The Creator, unfolding the possibilities within ourselves and within our world through the creative skills planted within us.

Halloween

A Family Perspective

by Bud Ozar

Halloween is a time for wearing masks. Because the perfect family does not exist, you do not need to hide behind the mask of being a perfect family. Recognizing and admitting this is the first step to being real. Shed the mask and celebrate the family you are.

Thanksgiving

A Family Perspective

by Bud Ozar

Because the Kingdom of God already began Jesus could promise the thief at Calvary “today you will be with me in Paradise.” We only need to look at the love and forgiveness in families to see signs of this Kingdom unfolding in your life. This Thanksgiving give thanks for the signs of the Kingdom in your family.