

# Second Hand Preacher

## *Feast of the Holy Family*

December 27, 2015

**1 John 3:1-2, 21-24**

We have just celebrated a great act of love. Yes, the Incarnation, Christ dwelling among us in flesh, is an expression of the love of God the Father. The basic Gospel story is really a love story. It began before the world and is the Word eternal. This is the Gospel reading for Christmas Mass during the day. Not exactly a manger story, but an account of Jesus coming to us none the less. This love of God was brought into space and time so that we may choose to love God, because he loved us first.

It is no wonder then that as we celebrate the unit of love, that is the Holy Family, we have a reading from the first letter of John. This is a commentary on love. John sought to guide his community in the way of love. John believed that the greatest expression of love was to live the law. Not the Torah as the Jews did of old, but the new covenant made possible by Jesus. He said to love one another as I have loved you. The old law is not abolished. The Schema of loving the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind, and with all your strength applies. Loving your neighbor as yourself is also part of the new and everlasting law. Since John declared his community children of God, they must live under this law.

This time of year is often the most important to children. They live for the wonderment of it all. Most never tire of hearing the greatest story ever told that is the story of the Holy Family. Hopefully, we are all children at heart. We should model our love after what we can imagine Jesus, Mary, and Joseph shared. Like John, we live in a community of love. To treat each other with care is to follow Jesus intentionally now and throughout the year.