



**ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SYRACUSE**  
OFFICE OF FAMILY/RESPECT LIFE MINISTRY

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TO: Parish Secretaries, Bulletin Editors, and Parish Webmasters  
FROM: Office of Family/Respect Life Ministry  
DATE: November 15, 2019  
SUBJECT: Family Perspective Articles for Lectionary CYCLE A, 2019-2020

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Listed below are the *Family Perspective* articles for inclusion in your weekly bulletin and your parish website and/or social media.

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## ADVENT

**December 1, 2019: 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent** (MT 24:37-44)                      **A Family Perspective**                      **by Bud Ozar**

In today's gospel Jesus advises: "Stay awake, watch out, and pray for the strength to hold your ground" when "fearful and bewildering signs" appear threatening your family. Resist being "fearful;" fear cripples! Instead "pray for the strength" to be courageous.

**December 8, 2019: Second Sunday of Advent** (MT 3:1-12)                      **A Family Perspective**                      **by Bud Ozar**

Like John the Baptist, every parent "prepares the way of the Lord" in the hearts of their children. Advent is a good time to ask; "Do I help or hinder my children to know Jesus?"

**December 15, 2019: Third Sunday of Advent** (MT 11:2-11)                      **A Family Perspective**                      **by Bud Ozar**

The question put to Jesus in today's gospel is also put to us today: "Are you the one?" Are you the one who will give guidance to the children in your life or must they look to TV sitcoms, films, videos and music lyrics for direction? Are you the one? Will you be the one?

**December 22, 2019: Fourth Sunday of Advent** (MT 1:18-24)                      **A Family Perspective**                      **by Bud Ozar**

The child born to Jesus and Mary was named Emmanuel, which means "God is with us." Every child is EMMANUEL, reminding us "God is with us." Children are signs of God's continuing presence in our lives.



## CHRISTMAS TIME

**December 25, 2019: Nativity of the Lord** (JN 1:1-18)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

This Christmas remember your task as a parent is the same as Mary's: We must not let our doubts, fears and unfulfilled expectations get in the way of our loving ACCEPTANCE of our children.

**December 29, 2019: Holy Family** (MT 2:13-15, 19-2)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

Today's gospel says Joseph "made his home in Nazareth." A "home" is built on the foundation of love, commitment and a shared history and is decorated with forgiveness, acceptance, rituals, discipline and mutual support. The Holy Family challenges us today: Don't live "anyplace," live at HOME!

**January 1, 2020: Mary, Mother of God** (LK 2:16-21)      **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!

**January 5, 2020: Epiphany** (MT 2:1-12)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

Today's gospel tells us "all Jerusalem" was upset because "King Herod was deeply troubled." A similar ripple effect happens in families; one person's negative attitude can affect the whole family. If you want a peaceful and joyful home, it must start with you. Be peaceful and joyful!

## ORDINARY TIME

**January 12, 2020: Baptism of the Lord** (MT 3:13-17)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

The words in today's gospel, "This is my beloved, with Him I am pleased," are words every child needs to hear often. Affirmation is important to raise happy and confident children.

**January 19, 2020: Second Sunday** (JN 1:29-34)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

Can you say "I have testified Jesus is the Son of God?" If you aren't talking about Jesus in your family, you aren't testifying. If you are not talking your talk, your children will see your words as meaningless.



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**January 26, 2020: Third Sunday** (MT 4:12-23)

**A Family Perspective**

**by Bud Ozar**

When Jesus called his disciples, they came “immediately.” Parents wish their children would respond as quickly, but they don’t. Children grow slowly into responsibility. It is a process like walking, not done “immediately”, but in small steps. Parenting demands patient encouragement.

**February 2, 2020: Feast of the Presentation** (LK 2:22-40)

Family life provides opportunities to grow in holiness. We are never perfect on this side of Heaven. Each of us has areas that could be presented to the Lord for purification. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide your family in finding those areas and offering them to God.

**February 9, 2020: Fifth Sunday** (MT 5:13-16)

**A Family Perspective**

**by Bud Ozar**

Today’s gospel challenges us to be a “light” to our family. Parents shine their guiding light, not in front but behind them, inviting their children to follow their “good deeds.”

**February 16, 2020: Sixth Sunday** (MT 5:17-37)

**A Family Perspective**

**by Bud Ozar**

To experience the peace which Christ promises we must shed our grudges, jealousy and feelings of being misunderstood, unappreciated or ignored. Peace and anger don’t mix. Today’s gospel warns, if you want peace in your heart and home, get rid of your anger. Anger is too costly.

**February 23, 2020: Seventh Sunday** (MT 5:38-48)

**A Family Perspective**

**by Bud Ozar**

Giving the shirt off your back, turning the other cheek or walking / driving the extra mile is normal stuff in families. We do that for one another. Today’s gospel reminds us all people, even those we don’t like, are our brothers and sisters. Our family should prepare us to be FAMILY to others.

## LENT

**March 1, 2020: First Sunday of Lent** (MT 4:1-11)

**A Family Perspective**

**by Bud Ozar**

In today’s gospel Jesus cautions it is not enough to provide food for our children; “one does not live on bread alone.” Let Lent 2020 be a time when you are “led by the Spirit” to explore new ways to be a moral guide to your children.



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**March 8, 2020: Second Sunday of Lent** (MT 17:1-9)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

Transfiguration is a common occurrence in families. When we commit to another, such as a spouse in marriage or a child in parenting, we are not committing to them only as they are today, but to the person they are becoming.

**March 15, 2020: Third Sunday of Lent** (JN 4:5-42)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

Our children are like the Samaritan woman in today's gospel. They need more than material things. They need the "living water" only the adults can give. It will teach them how to make decisions, take responsibility, respect themselves and others and live their commitments. With this "living water" they will "never thirst."

**March 22, 2020: Fourth Sunday of Lent** (JN 9:1-41)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

Failure to forgive blinds us to another's goodness. Lent provides an opportunity to wash away our blind-spots in the pool of forgiveness. Listen to Jesus in today's gospel: "Go wash and see."

**March 29, 2020: Fifth Sunday of Lent** (JN 11:1-45)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

Our families can become wrapped up chasing things we perceive will make us happy. Jesus' words to Lazarus, He says to us: "Come out" from what entombs you. In this fifth week of Lent "untie" yourself and be free from unnecessary possessions.

**April 5, 2020: Passion (Palm) Sunday** (MT 26:14—27:66)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

The cruel death of Jesus tells us bad things can and do happen to very good people. It also tells us God is present during the suffering. Bad things happen but God does not abandon us.

## EASTER TIME

**April 12, 2020: Easter Sunday** (JN 20:1-9)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

Today's gospel instructs us Jesus "had to rise from the dead." The dying we experience with unmet expectations in marriage and parenting is normal to family life. Families must rise above disappointments and be Easter people all year long.



## ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SYRACUSE

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### **April 19, 2020: Second Sunday of Easter - Divine Mercy Sunday** (JN 20:19-31)

**A Family Perspective**

**by Bud Ozar**

“Whose sins you forgive, are forgiven” means the grudges we carry only make us miserable. The Kingdom of God begins in your home where children learn the paths to peace promised in today’s gospel through merciful and forgiving demonstrations by their parents.

### **April 26, 2020: Third Sunday of Easter** (LK 24:13-35)

**A Family Perspective**

**by Bud Ozar**

In today’s gospel the disciples were returning home so “downcast” they did not recognize Jesus walking with them. In our homes we can be so overwhelmed with responsibilities we don’t see God with us. Today’s gospel tells us to stop and open our eyes to the blessings we are to one another.

### **May 3, 2020: Fourth Sunday of Easter** (JN 10:1-10)

**A Family Perspective**

**by Bud Ozar**

In today’s gospel Jesus tells us, HE IS THE WAY and warns anyone who offers “another way” to happiness is “a thief and a bandit.” Strong words! Don’t listen to the sales pitch of society for happiness. Look to yourself where God is present and “calls you by name and leads you to abundant life.”

### **May 10, 2020: Fifth Sunday of Easter** (JN 14:1-12)

**A Family Perspective**

**by Bud Ozar**

Jesus tells us in the gospel: “I am in the Father and the Father is in me!” The point is: God is in each one of us, in our relationships and in our homes. The vocation of the Christian family is to live the divine gift which is already in and around us.

### **May 10, 2020: Mother’s Day**

**A Family Perspective**

**by Bud Ozar**

Mothers are instruments of Christ’s presence in the home. A mother’s love reveals the attentive, thoughtful, serving, forgiving and concerned side of God’s love. Thanks to all mothers for showing us the tender and loving face of God.

### **May 17, 2020: Sixth Sunday of Easter** (JN 14:15-21)

**A Family Perspective**

**by Bud Ozar**

In today’s gospel Jesus prepared his disciples for his departure. Family life is a series of departures. As we mature and grow older we constantly transition from the familiar to the new unknown. Today Jesus assures us we are not alone in these transitions. “I will not leave you orphans. I will come to you.”



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### **May 25, 2019: Memorial Day**

**A Family Perspective**

**by Bud Ozar**

Our decisions create our style of living and also what kind of person we are. That's the awesome power of free will. As we celebrate Memorial Day it is a good time to ask ourselves; "How do I want to be remembered?" The power is in your hands, or rather in your decisions.

### **May 21, 2020: Ascension Thursday** (MT 28:16-20)

**A Family Perspective**

**by Bud Ozar**

As Jesus appointed apostles, he also appoints parents to represent Him in the family; "make disciples of your children, baptizing and teaching them all I have taught you. Don't worry, I am with you always."

### **May 24, 2020: Seventh Sunday of Easter** (JN 17:1-11)

**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.

### **May 31, 2020: Pentecost** (JN 20:19-23)

**A Family Perspective**

**by Bud Ozar**

Like the disciples in today's gospel, there are times we shut the doors of our hearts to people or events. It's how we create emotional distance. Permanent distancing is lethal and prevents the PEACE Jesus offers you today.

## ORDINARY TIME

### **June 7, 2020: Trinity Sunday** (JN 3:16-18)

**A Family Perspective**

**by Bud Ozar**

As the Father "sent his son into the world" so parents send their children into the world "so that the world might be saved." This is the missionary role of the Christian family. Your family is a school where your children develop convictions which enable them to make a difference in the world.

### **June 14, 2020: Body & Blood of Christ** (JN 6:51-58)

**A Family Perspective**

**by Bud Ozar**

Parenting is a Eucharistic activity because from the first moment of conception children consume us, our flesh, blood, energy, time and resources. If we don't sacrifice ourselves, our children would not have life. This is the priesthood of parenting. Christ is present in this self-sacrifice.



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**June 21, 2020: Twelfth Sunday** (MT 10:26-33)

**A Family Perspective**

**by Bud Ozar**

Jesus says “Do not be afraid” three times in today’s gospel and reminds us “all concealed secrets will be revealed.” Do not be afraid to acknowledge problems in your family. If they remain “hidden in darkness” they will “destroy body and soul.” Healing, understanding and hope are found only “in the light” of openness. “Do not be afraid.”

**June 21, 2020: Father’s Day**

**A Family Perspective**

**by Bud Ozar**

Fathering is an awesome responsibility and not for the weak or transient. Today we humbly recognize our need for courageous fathers to stand boldly in the face of the powerful cultural forces in our culture which threaten our children. Today we ask fathers to be the courageous leaders we need.

**June 28, 2020: Thirteenth Sunday** (MT 10:37-42)

**A Family Perspective**

**by Bud Ozar**

Today’s gospel challenges us to resist the individualism of our culture. Everything we are and have is pure gift which we are expected to share especially to the “lowly ones.” What has been freely given needs to be shared freely. No strings attached.

**July 4, 2019: July 4<sup>th</sup>**

**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.

**July 5, 2020: Fourteenth Sunday** (MT 11:25-30)

**A Family Perspective**

**by Bud Ozar**

Just as Jesus received a mission today, parents accept the mission of raising a family. Parents are not alone in this exhausting and difficult mission. Today Jesus tells us “Come to me and I will give your rest.”

**July 12, 2020: Fifteenth Sunday** (MT 13:1-23)

**A Family Perspective**

**by Bud Ozar**

The stress and anxieties of family life are like “thorns which choke off” any opportunity to reflect on God’s presence in our lives. Notice in today’s gospel Jesus “left the house” so He could connect with His Father. Grasp five minutes each day to appreciate God walking with you.

**July 19, 2020: Sixteenth Sunday** (MT 13:24-43)

**A Family Perspective**

**by Bud Ozar**

Parents plant values in their children anticipating the tiny seeds of honesty, respect, commitment and fidelity will grow with their child and one day become “a safe haven” to many.



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**July 26, 2020: Seventeenth Sunday** (MT 13:44-52)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

The man in today's gospel "sold all he had" for the treasure he found. Family relationships are "treasures" and demand our total personal investment. Invest yourself in the "treasure" of your family.

**August 2, 2020: Eighteenth Sunday** (MT 14:13-21)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

The apostles were just being practical when they asked Jesus to "dismiss the crowds to go buy food." Jesus knew there is always enough when we place our trust in the Father, even with just 5 loaves and fishes. Trust is the bridge to miracles.

**August 6, 2020: Transfiguration Thursday**      **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.

**August 9, 2020: Nineteenth Sunday** (MT 14:22-33)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

The demands of family can be so overwhelming we feel walking on water would be easier. When Jesus was pressured, He dismissed everyone, so he could be "by himself and pray." When overwhelmed and stressed, go to a quiet place and surrender your pressured feelings to the Lord using Peter's prayer in today's gospel: "Lord, save me."

**August 15, 2020: 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.

**August 16, 2020: Twentieth Sunday** (MT 15:21-28)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

The mother in today's gospel persisted, even when she was ignored and insulted. She would do whatever was necessary to bring relief to her child. Parenting is more than bringing life into the world; it is also about sacrificing daily for your children.

**August 23, 2020: Twenty-First Sunday** (MT 16:13-20)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

Like Jesus in today's gospel, we are seen by others in different ways. Perhaps the name our family gives us is closest to our true identity. They know us best. Who do they say you are?



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**August 30, 2020: Twenty-Second Sunday** (MT 16:21-27)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

Relationships live in a careful balance. If a person changes, the balance is altered requiring a shift in the relationship. In today's gospel Jesus announced a change and Peter resisted. Sometimes, those we count on for support may actually get in the way. Jesus told Peter: "You are an obstacle to me."

**September 6, 2020: Twenty-Third Sunday** (MT 18: 15-20)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

The key word in today's gospel is "listen." We cannot change another person; not alone, not with others and not with a whole Church. All we can do is state our position and "if he listens to you" then he / she can take the steps necessary to change themselves. Change comes from within.

**September 7, 2019: 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.

**September 13, 2020: Twenty-Fourth Sunday** (MT 18: 21-35)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

Unable to forgive another, means we are holding onto a past wrong and hoping for a better past. That is not going to happen. We must move on with our life by accepting we were unjustly treated and it will not be corrected. We aren't condoning the injustice. We just don't let it control our lives any longer. Forgiveness is critical to living a healthy life in the present.

**September 20, 2020: Twenty-Fifth Sunday** (MT 20:1-16a)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

Today Jesus is saying to us: "Why are you idle? Go into my vineyard." Family, where "the last will be first," is the "vineyard" entrusted to us in today's gospel. Successful families are constructed by "laborers," who work hard on family relationships, and not by couch potatoes.

**September 27, 2020: Twenty-Sixth Sunday** (MT 21:28-32)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

In today's gospel Jesus asked, "What is your opinion?" Why do we think our opinion is dogma or fact? An opinion is only how we perceive a situation or how we feel comfortable doing something. Don't argue over or become divided by "your opinion."



## ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SYRACUSE

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**October 4, 2020: Twenty-Seventh Sunday** (MT 21:33-43)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

Every family is visited by difficult times which can unite or divide. These hardships, which we would quickly reject, hold the potential to be the unifying “cornerstone” where we drop our pettiness and defenses and pull together, linked by a common bond and love for one another.

**October 11, 2020: Twenty-Eighth Sunday** (MT 22:1-14)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

Today’s gospel speaks about “unworthy wedding guests.” What makes a “worthy” guest? Presence and presents are not enough. The greatest gift we can give is support to the couple as they voyage through life together because marriage naturally contains within it the fields of disappointment. Think of the weddings you have attended. Have you been a “worthy guest?”

**October 18, 2020: Twenty-Ninth Sunday** (MT 22:15-21)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

Jesus was exasperated when he scolded: “Why do you put me to the test?” It is natural for children to test parents; this is how they learn and how we teach limits, rules and values. Be like Jesus in today’s gospel; he was firm, honest and direct.

**October 25, 2020: Thirtieth Sunday** (MT 22:34-40)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

In today’s gospel the Pharisee was talking about commandments (Something we are forced to obey by external pressure) and Jesus was talking about love (an internal exhortation to give our heart, soul and mind to another). One demands allegiance, the other requires personal commitment. In our families we daily lay down our lives for each other not because we “gotta” but because love compels us.

**October 31, 2020: Halloween**      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

It is cute when children pretend and dress in costumes but it is sad when adults hide behind false identities. In our families we don’t need to pretend because we are loved, accepted, affirmed, appreciated for whom we are, and not for whom we want to be!

**November 1, 2020: All Saints** (MT 5:1-12a)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

Anyone can be a “saint” in front of strangers but the daily acts of patience, acceptance, forgiveness, listening, and dying to oneself within the family are religious acts. Family life is the turf of sanctity.

**November 2, 2020: All Souls** (MT 5:1-12a)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

Our loved ones, who have stepped through the door of death, are now at rest, free of all burdens. Our hope is that as they go home to the Lord they bring their love and concern for us with them. Death cannot totally separate families; our love binds us together forever.



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**November 8, 2020: Thirty-Second Sunday** (MT 25: 1-13)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

The bridesmaids in today's gospel were considered "foolish" because they let their lamps go out. Don't be foolish. Pay attention to the small acts necessary to keep the flame alive in all your relationships.

**November 15, 2020: Thirty-Third Sunday** (MT 25:14-30)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

As the man in today's gospel entrusted his servants with his money, so God has "entrusted" our family to us. Like the good servants we are expected, not to play it safe, but to selflessly and totally invest ourselves in each other.

**November 22, 2020: Christ the King** (MT 25:31-46)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

Families feed the hungry, give drinks to thirsty toddlers and welcome strangers and even estranged relatives into our homes. We clothe children and visit family members who are sick and imprisoned. The routine actions of family life are religious and priestly for we make Christ present in what we do. Family life is Beatitude life.

**November 26, 2020: Thanksgiving** (LK 21:20-28)      **A Family Perspective**      **by Bud Ozar**

As we gather to give thanks this week, we must also ask how well we share with "the least." Happiness is secured not by having, but by sharing.