



Father Danny Murphy is a retired Pastor from Brooklyn NY. A gifted man with a God given talent to inspire and God's gift to us at Holy Cross Church in Vero Beach Florida. This is just one of his inspirational homilies.

Fr. Danny Murphy – Feast of the Holy Family – 2019

The feast of the Holy Family. We'll start with a trivia question: For what is John Pierpont famous? Now before you start doing your "text stuff," I'm going to give you a huge hint and then I'm going to tell you the answer. Here's the huge hint: John Pierpont brought a smile to your face and brought a smile to millions of people, of all ages, throughout the world these past few weeks! Do you get it? John Pierpont wrote the lyrics and composed the music for the song, "Jingle Bells." And you can't sing "Jingle Bells" without smiling. You can't do it! Try it when you get home! You can't sing "Jingle Bells" without smiling. So, even though he's been dead for over 150 years, John Pierpont has brought smiles to many faces. So, now, what in heaven's name does "Jingle Bells" have to do with the Feast of the

Holy Family? Hopefully, we'll see in a few moments. The feast of the Holy Family – for years I exempted myself from this feast, figuring that I'm not married, so I don't have any children, this feast has nothing to do with me. Of course, I was wrong! Each of us belongs to many families, whether we're married or single, whether we're young or old, whether we live alone or with others; each of us belongs to many families, because families come in all different sizes and shapes. There's our nuclear family, our extended family, our family of our friends, the family of our parish, the family of the Catholic Church, the family of our country, the family of humankind. So, we all belong, each of us does, to many families. The Feast of the Holy Family gives us an opportunity to think about the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. But this feast also affords us an opportunity to think about the many families to which each of us belongs, to see how, perhaps, we can make those many families holier. Some suggestions, to help make the many families to which each of us belongs, holier. First suggestion; let's go back to John Pierpont. When he wrote "Jingle Bells," in 1850 he couldn't have had any idea of how many smiles he would bring to people of all ages, all over the world. He didn't have to have any idea. That's the key, it seems to me, for holy families – that we give our best effort and we leave the results to God! If we are good, if we do good, the families to which each of us belong will be holier. We can do that! The next suggestion comes from of all people, John Lennon when he told us: "And so Happy Christmas to black and to white, to yellow and red ones, let's stop all the fights!" Amen to that! And certainly, each of the families to which we belong would be holier, if we followed

the teaching of St. Paul that we heard tonight. Imagine now if we were to do this, just try to imagine how much holier each of the families to which you belong would be: "Put on heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, bearing with one another, forgiving one another. Just as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do. Over all these, put on love, the bond of perfection. Let the peace of Christ control your heart, for you have been called in to one body. And be thankful."