

*Sermon from the Feast of the Holy Family, Part 1*

March 4, 2018

“O Lord Jesus Christ, who when Thou was subject to Mary and Joseph didst sanctify the home life with ineffable virtues: grant that by their assistance, we may be instructed by the example of the Holy Family and become partakers of their eternal happiness.” (Collect, Feast of the Holy Family)

As we celebrate the mysteries surrounding the Epiphany, we also celebrate the example of the Holy Family as something to study and meditate upon and to put into practice in our own families. This time of year (Christmas) is a time when families get together and we feel a need to be close to them. We also sometimes feel a need to comfort those who cannot get close to their own families. There is also a proper order, by Divine Design, within the family, but in our own times this order is being attacked. Women libbers would do away with families, and the LGBT's want to redefine it. What do they have to offer to take its place? Nothing. Emptiness, sadness, loneliness – which lead to discouragement and despair.

The Collect from the Mass on the feast day of the Holy Family offers some good advice for us to strengthen our families in the present attacks against it. First, it is addressed to Our Lord, Who sanctified home life with untold virtues, being subject to Mary and Joseph. Then we beg from Him the help of His parents that they may assist us to imitate the example of the Holy Family so that the end of eternal salvation can also be ours.

So there is the foundation of virtue that is so critical to family life. If we want our homes to be happy, loving places that lead to eternal happiness, then virtue in each member is necessary and each one has to strive to practice it on his own. This is not always an easy task. The epistle on this feast day lists some of these virtues: "put ye on, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, the bowels of mercy, benignity, humility, modesty, patience, bearing with one another, and forgiving one another if any have a complaint against another." (Col. 3:12ff)

*Rev. Charles Van Vliet, FSSP*

*Pastor, Regina Caeli Parish*