



Newsletter

"Service of and witness to the faith are necessary for salvation"

-CCC § 1816

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HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS...

Contributed by a member of the Board of Directors of the Pope John Paul II Society of Evangelists

Family life, by itself, within the four walls of a house, is a place of sanctification (obtaining holiness). At home, there are opportunities for constantly practicing the greatest of virtues, which is charity. The Apostle Paul states that charity is superior to all the virtues. It is the first of the theological virtues: "So faith, hope, charity abide, these three. But the greatest of these is charity." (1 Cor 13:13) So, family life will be a life of sanctification when charity becomes rooted in that life - charity with all its details of patience, kindness, detachment, self-denial, and so forth. In the parents' role of authority, charity can also correct their children as this authority comes from God, which is the duty of the parents to inform and teach in performing God's service. But these corrections should always be out of justice and love and not out of anger. When we find charity lacking in the home, the family falls apart. There is no commitment to unity. There is division, intolerance, argument, impatience, and a lack of sacrifice.

In your home, can you say you are a family that teaches, practices, and fervently lives the Catholic faith? Does your family love, care, and communicate with each other? How can your family live in peace and harmony? Do all your family members respect, care and communicate with each other? The best example and role model for us is the Holy Family of Nazareth. There is little written in the scriptures of Christ's early years but we can surmise that they lived for each other in complete surrender. There was love, respect, charity, and complete obedience to God's will.

If home is where your heart is, then pray that God will reign in your home and be #1. Create a Christian atmosphere representative of a holy catholic family,

fervently in love with Christ. Spend time together dialoging between members, put Christ's mark on your home, and build solid walls in your home for your family so the secular world cannot enter. Know what your children are watching on television, the music they listen too, and whom your children's friends are. Be aware that the secular world is not Christian. Provide an order and structure to your household that gives stability to the family, parents need to pray together and also as a family, parents must love each other and show and share their love of God and the church, and be in total obedience to the will of God. The family belongs to God and should belong to God. God's law must be carried out in the family and the family must be governed by God's laws, not by those of the world. No home is perfect most of the time but invite God in to reign and live in your home and create and maintain a fervent Christian atmosphere. Persevere in transforming your home into a center of divine glory, where God reigns happily, content, pleased with all those who comprise your family. Pray for selflessness that you will think of what is best for the members of your family instead of yourself, pray for the patience to speak when needed and remain quiet when you are going to be critical. Learn to tolerate each other without resentment, without harsh judgments, and accept suffering in realizing sacrifice is necessary. Ask Jesus for a supernatural spirit in all difficulties that you may persevere.

Virtues must be practiced and when we fail, which is human, we need to keep trying till the virtue is acquired. A family will change only when we first change ourselves. Your family belongs to God and we

are God's children. Our sanctification is based on heroic virtues and your family is a wonderful place to practice gentleness, prudence, and the greatest of these, charity. Love Jesus with all your heart, be a family unit that prays and works together, be an example to your children of charity and obedience to God, and let God reign in a #1 position within your home. God bless you all!!

The thoughts written were taken from my notes while I was on a silent 2 day retreat in Temecula, CA. presented by the Miles Christi Fathers. The retreat focus was on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius according to the Magisterium of the Church and based on solid Catholic spirituality. This order is world-wide and their main apostolate is spiritual direction of young adults, preaching of retreats and the Spiritual Exercises, and Catholic intellectual formation. It is encouraged by the Pope for the faithful to attend a spiritual retreat at least once a year and I would recommend this retreat. For me, this was a wonderful spiritual experience that let me get back on track to my purpose in life, evaluating my weaknesses and much needed improvements, and facing challenges needed on my spiritual journey. Anyone interested in these retreats can find additional information at www.mileschristi.org.

Word of the Month

Ecclesiastical - (i klē' zē as' ti kəl), *adj.*

Of or pertaining to the church or the clergy; churchly; clerical; not secular. [1375-1428; late ME; see ECCLESIASTES, -ICAL]

[from Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language, 1996, Random House Value Publishing, Inc.]



Pope Benedict XVI'S February Prayer Intentions 2009

- **General:** *That the Pastors of the Church may always be docile to the action of the Holy Spirit in their teaching and in their service to God's people,*
- **Mission:** *That the church in Africa may find adequate ways and means to promote reconciliation, justice and peace efficaciously, according to the indications of the Synod of the Bishop's Special Assembly for Africa.*

The Domestic Church

As I was typing up the entries for the February calendar, I had the feeling that something was wrong but I couldn't put my finger on it. Then, a few days later, I was doing some grocery shopping and noticed that the valentine's candies and treats were already out, and I thought "Hey, what happened to St. Valentine?" I went back home and checked the saint calendars that I use as references and sure enough, St. Valentine was not there. So, what did happen to St. Valentine?

Well, in 1969 St. Valentine was removed from the general calendar. Why? It seems that there were several martyrs in the early church who were known by the name of Valentine or Valentinus., and since the true history of St. Valentine was bit obscure, if not downright legendary, it was decided to remove his feast day. Now, this doesn't mean that there was no St. Valentine, or even that he is no longer a saint. It just means that the Church no longer celebrates his feast day on February 14th.

Does this mean we can no longer honor St. Valentine? No, it does not. You, or I may still honor St. Valentine in our private celebrations, if we chose to do so. Just know that there were, according to the Catholic

Encyclopedia, at least three different St. Valentines, all of them were martyrs and all of them were listed in early lists of martyrs under the date February 14th.

One was a priest in Rome who lived and died during the reign of Claudius II. Claudius had got it into his head that his soldiers should all be single men, so he outlawed marriage for all young men. Valentine defied the emperor and continued to perform marriages for young people until he was caught and put to death and buried on the Flamian Way. A second St. Valentine was a young Roman, possibly from the province of Africa, who was martyred for refusing to give up his faith. It is said, that while he was in jail he fell in love with the daughter of his jailer and before he died he sent her a letter signed 'From your Valentine'. Some consider this the first valentine. Still another was a bishop of Interamna (now called Terni), in Italy who was also martyred in Rome in the second half of the third century and buried on the Flamian Way.

To honor any or all of these saintly men is reason enough to remember the feast of St. Valentine.

February 2009 Calendar

- 1 **4th Sunday of the Year**; St. Ansgar
- 2 Feast of the Presentation of the Lord
- 3 St. Blase
- 4 St. Joseph of Leonissa
- 5 St. Agatha
- 6 St. Paul Miki & Companions
- 7 St. Colette
- 8 **5th Sunday of the Year**; St. Josephine Bakhita
- 9 St. Jerome Emiliani
- 10 St. Scholastica
- 11 Our Lady of Lourdes
- 12 St. Apollonia
- 13 St. Giles Mary of St. Joseph
- 14 Sts. Cyril & Methodius
- 15 **6th Sunday of the Year**; St. Claude la Colombière
- 16 St. Gilbert of Sempringham
- 17 Seven Founders of the Order of Servites
- 18 Blessed John of Fiesole
- 19 St. Conrad of Piacenza
- 20 Blessed Jacinta & Francisco Marto
- 21 St. Peter Damian
- 22 **7th Sunday of the Year**
- 23 St. Polycarp
- 24 Blessed Luke Belludi
- 25 **Ash Wednesday**; Blessed Sebastian of Aparicio
- 26 St. Porphyry of Gaza

- 27 St. Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows
- 28 Blessed Daniel Brottier

Holy Family Chaplet

Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, I give you my heart.
Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, be with me in my last hour.

Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, may I breathe forth my soul
in peace with you.

Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true man.
Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary most holy.

Blessed be St. Joseph, her most chaste spouse.
Amen.

Say 3 Our Father's, 3 Hail Mary's, and 3 Glory be's



February is the Month of the Holy Family

Act of Consecration to the Holy Family

O Jesus, our most loving Redeemer! You came to enlighten the world with Your teaching and example, and to live the greater part of Your life with Mary and Joseph in their home at Nazareth. Thus You sanctified the family that was to be an example to all Christian

families. Graciously receive our family, which is dedicated and consecrated to You this day. Protect it; guard it and establish it in holy fear, in peace, and in the harmony of Christian charity. By conforming ourselves to the model of Your family, may we all without exception attain to eternal happiness.

Mary, Mother of Jesus and our Mother! By your intercession make this, our humble offering, acceptable to Jesus and obtain for us His grace and blessings.

O St. Joseph, most holy guardian of Jesus and Mary!

Assist us by your prayers in all our spiritual and temporal needs, so that we may be able to praise our Divine Saviour, Jesus, together with Mary and you for all eternity. Amen.

*~~ from "Prayers for Today," published by Leaflet
Missal Co.*