

(January 2019)

The Joy of Love

Chapter Three – Looking to Jesus: The Vocation of the Family (part II)

“Christ the Lord makes himself present to the Christian spouses in the sacrament of marriage and remains with them. In the incarnation, he assumes human love, purifies it and brings it to fulfillment. By his Spirit, he gives spouses the capacity to live that love, permeating every part of their lives of faith, hope and charity. In this way, the spouses are consecrated.” 67

“The sacrament of marriage is not a social convention, an empty ritual or merely the outward sign of a commitment. The sacrament is a gift given for the sanctification and salvation of the spouses. {...} Consequently, the decision to marry and to have a family ought to be the fruit of a process of vocational discernment.” 72

“The sacrament is not a “thing” or a “power”, for in it Christ himself encounters Christian spouses. He dwells with them, gives them the strength to take up their crosses and so follow him, to rise again after they have fallen, to forgive one another, to bear one another’s burdens.” 73

Prayer to the Holy Family

Jesus, Mary and Joseph,
in you we contemplate
the splendour of true love;
to you we turn with trust.

Holy Family of Nazareth,
grant that our families too
may be places of communion and prayer,
authentic schools of the Gospel
and small domestic churches.

Holy Family of Nazareth,
may families never again experience
violence, rejection and division;
may all who have been hurt or scandalized
find ready comfort and healing.

Holy Family of Nazareth,
make us once more mindful
of the sacredness and inviolability of the family,
and its beauty in God’s plan.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph,
Graciously hear our prayer.
Amen.