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Nucleus 18°

Let's walk together We were born a family

Under the care of Gabriela Patiño

Our reflection on the family leads us in this nucleus to look at ourselves and understand that we are all born families. Taking a cue from the Holy Family of Nazareth, Fr Marco Panero, SDB, helps us to deepen *Amorislaetitia* and invites us to go to our natural origins and hold back on our past as a condition for looking at our present with courage and effectiveness. This is how we can occupy the place that awaits us in this world, as its citizens, as children.

Our thanks to Don Panero for this exercise of looking out over our history, which does so much good to each and everyone.

A family of little ones

Holy Family of Nazareth, model of every family! How many times have we heard this expression, to the point that it might seem almost obvious to us, conventionally rhetorical. Yet, every time we hear it repeated, the childish desire to sneak among those blessed walls of the house in Nazareth revives in the heart, to spy on its inhabitants, to breathe, even if in passing, that holy family atmosphere that reigned there.

We imagine it as a family of little ones, the Holy Family. That is, made up of people who do not participate, if not minimally, in the great decision-making processes of history; who have no say in the matter, but on which the burdens and consequences of decisions taken elsewhere fall in compensation. As when the order of the census, issued from the Roman imperial palaces, reaches distant and obscure Bethlehem, and the little ones of the Gospel set out there (cf. Lk 2: 1-3).

A family of little ones, therefore, the Holy Family, entirely subject to the decisions of others. Yet devoid of any resentment, which retains no animosity or resentment towards anyone. It is admirable how Joseph and Mary do not allow their peace to be stolen by external events. Faced with decisions that surpass their understanding, they do not get lost in useless resistances, which would have made them lose the greatest good they possessed, the priceless one of peace of heart, proper to those who trust in God and entrust themselves to Him. The emperor is entitled to obedience in what belongs to him, but the heart remains free, internally composed, in the possession of the one who knows how to guard it. Here lies the real treasure and authentic freedom: Joseph and Mary understood it well.

In this way, in the Family of Nazareth the days follow one another serene, in an atmosphere of mutual obedience: Jesus is submissive to his parents (cf. Lk 2,51); Mary silently obeys Joseph, as was expected of a pious Jewish woman; Joseph, in turn, readily obeys political and divine authority, scrupulously respecting the religious obligations required of every Israelite (cf. Lk 2: 21-24) and showing an unparalleled readiness to welcome what God, through the angel, was communicating to him from time to time.(cf. Mt 2: 13-23).

Here is the grace of the Family of Nazareth, where each one knows how to be in his own place, occupying his role with care and reserve. Holy discretion!

We were born a family!

Against the amiable background of the Holy Family of Nazareth, it is nice to spend time remembering our family of origin, of that crossroads of affections that hosted our entry into this world. We came into the world in a family, with the beauty and limitations of every family, but still within a family: taken for granted as long as you want, but not at all irrelevant!

Making a clear and grateful memory of our past, of our origins, is a condition for learning to perceive the depth of the present that we are given to live, a present that must be of extraordinary importance, if so many events and people were needed to prepare it.

Remembering our family is required so as not to forget that we are and always remain children, regardless of age, state of life, professional specialization or experience gained. And this is good for us, because it keeps us humble. It is always from within a past that preserves my origin, that I am allowed to look out into the present, occupy my niche on the world stage, express the height of who I am. My own personality matures to the extent that I recognize myself as a child (of God, of my parents, of a religious tradition, homeland, culture, language, thought, ...), in which I recognize the bonds to which I owe myself, and I commit myself to honor them. In fact, if the link with the origin is abruptly interrupted, fatal dysfunctions are often produced, which the vocabulary records with its own terms, often privative (atheist, orphan, person without a country...).

It makes us reflect how it was not otherwise for Jesus. When, by now famous, he returns to his homeland, his fellow citizens take an x-ray of him which tells exactly where he is in the world: «Isn't this the carpenter's son? And his mother, isn't her name Mary? And his brothers, James, Joseph, Simon and Judas? " (Mt 13,55). There is everything: parental, parental, professional ties.

So, to be honest, we too cannot think ourselves, except always within the framework of what precedes us. Who we are, we owe it in good measure to those who preceded us, parents, family members, teachers, spiritual guides, ... who, with patience and tenacity, have put their hand to the sacrifice required of every educator: invest with breadth, accepting not to be able to ever see the finished work, you only have the consolation of having contributed to the detail of an infinitely greater undertaking.

This was well understood by Mons. Angelo Roncalli, the future Saint John XXIII, when, by now a bishop and apostolic visitor to Bulgaria, he wrote in a letter to his parents: "Since I left the house, towards the age of ten, I have read many books and learned many things that you could not teach me. But those few things that I have learned from you are still the most precious and important and support and give warmth to the many others that I learned later, in many and many years." Holy gratitude!

Fr Marco Panero, SDB

WORKSHEET FOR THE CONFEDERAL, FEDERATION, UNION COUNCILS AND FOR ALL PAST PUPILS OF THE WORLD.

Calmly read the reflection offered to us in this eighteenth nucleus.

Do the exercise of looking at your family roots to discover strengths and weaknesses. As Pope John, identify things you learned in the family that support your life today.

Share as a group those discoveries that may be of use to others.

Please send your personal or group response by e-mail to

delegatamondialeexallieve@gmail.com or by regular mail to the address:

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Pray together

Magnificat of the Family

Our soul magnifies the Lord,
and we rejoice in God our Savior.
For He has looked with favor
To the poverty of our love.
Now everyone will be able to see His power
that transforms our path.
The Lord has done great things for us,
he has filled our life with good things:
He has given us a family to grow up in,
He has placed at our side wise and joyful guides,
He made us meet sincere friends.
His mercy lifts us up from weakness,
His forgiveness overcomes the narrow-mindedness of the heart.
His Word clears the uncertainty of our steps.
He holds our hope,
He offers us a community in which to serve.
Great is the Lord who has given us this love
and He will remain as a witness of our union,
so that it may be strong, faithful, fruitful.
He will not abandon us.
Our soul magnifies the Lord,
our Savior.
Amen.