

Reflections

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Always Mother

Mother of the family. You are mothers in the image and likeness of God, and as such, you have a great task, a difficult mission in your own homes. What is the task of a mother in her family? We could now speak at length and extensively on many maternal tasks. I will touch on only one aspect, but a far-reaching aspect: your religious task in the home. It is about a triple religious task: the religious self-education of the mother herself, the religious education of the children, and the religious influence on the husband.

1. The religious self-education of the mother. They have matured by life and in life; therefore, they have a more pronounced sensitivity for healthy religiosity, for dominion of the religious life. How is a mother holy? She is a person who radiates a divine atmosphere in which the presence of God can be felt and the glories of Mary are experienced. That is our aspiration as mothers. A divine aroma must emerge from us, a supernatural atmosphere which envelops us and our entire home.

What can I do for this to become a reality? I must strive for the Blessed Mother to take form in me. I have to grow and mature evermore so towards the little Mary, a reflection and transparency of the great Mary. I must cultivate in myself the Heart Shrine, foster childlike attachment and personal dialog with the God of my soul. Thus I will be able to achieve profound religiosity and radiate an interior richness to those around me.

2. The religious education of the children. In divine light, my child is a bearer of God, a Shrine of God, and my main task as a mother is his/her religious education, the education of his/her faith, and his/her attachment to the persons of the supernatural world. Most important is that the children are rooted in God, that they feel sheltered in his Father Heart. Do I truly consider that mission as my most important mission in regard to my children?

As we all know, education – and especially religious education – is a very difficult task because the outer environment does not help at all. As a matter of fact, it hampers and complicates the best intentions of the parents.

Additionally, education toward freedom is not easy either: to leave them freedom to the extreme; to form them so they can learn to decide for themselves autonomously and to know how to decide for what is good;

to give more importance to free decision than to order and discipline; to not opt for the model child who is submissive, orderly, and weak in character, but to opt for the child who is creative, independent, and of firm character.....

Not only is it a difficult task, it is also very painful for many of you. Many of your adult children do not practice the religious life and you feel – at least in part – responsible for it. As a last resort, you are always left with being a personal example, praying for them and surrendering them to the Blessed Mother so She may take care of them.

3. Religious influence on the husband. Our fundamental task is to distance him from what is material and earthly and elevate him to a superior level. We know the words of St. Bernard: “*The male is not elevated nor redeemed but by the woman,*” that is, by the Blessed Virgin and by the little Mary. You should be “redemptresses” for your husbands, a blessing and salvation for them. I think you are all aware of this great mission.

But it is another painful reason for many of you because many husbands are estranged from God, estranged from religion, estranged from the Church. And, nevertheless, it continues being one of my greatest tasks: to try to connect my husband to God, to help him be the priest in the home, to strive so that – along with me – he may save himself. And once again, the Virgin has to support us and complete us in that.

In the Covenant of Love with the Virgin, her task is to do what we – with our limited strength – cannot achieve. Let us then work for the Virgin and her Realm and let us leave the care and the conversion of our husbands in her hands. It is worthy of admiration how many of you have to manage completely on your own; a great example of willingness, surrender and fidelity.

Questions for reflection

1. How do I cultivate my spiritual life?
2. Have I been able to achieve a religious style of living in my home?
3. Do I place into the hands of the Virgin the things I cannot accomplish?

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