

Reflections

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45 – October 15, 2008

The Family, a covenant community and a community of love

The first thing we can say is: the family is a Covenant community because from the beginning, we already find in the natural family a Covenant, the **marriage Covenant** which was sealed by the spouses on the wedding day. Marriage is already a natural Covenant of Love because it is a community of life between two persons who want to form a permanent and complete community, but it is also a community because it is a sacrament.

The sacrament of marriage wants to reflect the love Christ has for the Church. It wants to symbolize the Covenant of Love between Christ and the Church. To demonstrate the love of Christ through married life: this is a difficult task, a very high ideal.

This marriage Covenant is the origin and when children come along, this Covenant becomes a **family Covenant**. Every Covenant tends to create community, family: The baptismal Covenant gives us the Church, the family of the children of God.

The marriage Covenant seeks to broaden itself in a family. It is no longer the marriage, but also the children who organically submerge themselves into a community of love, one blood line. It is a mutual giving and receiving. Belonging and committing oneself grows and deepens. It is an exchange of love and life between a husband and wife, between parents and children, between brothers and sisters.

We all know the importance of this family community because the natural family has a decisive role for the healthy development of each human person, in the physical as well as in the intellectual, in the spiritual as well as in the moral. On the other hand, it also has of foremost importance the forging of an authentic social living together because the family is the basis and the model for all human community. In it, men and women learn to be persons, they learn to attach themselves to others in a personal way.

Men and women need to create attachments. These represent their fundamental security, their sense of being, their joy, their center. A child, upon being born in a home, enters naturally and organically into this world of attachments which is his/her family. Around these fundamental attachments, he/she builds his/her own world.

The [Covenant of Love in Schoenstatt](#) includes not only an original attachment with the Blessed Virgin, but also with the whole world which surrounds him/her. Thus also, the family as a Covenant community, means that it is a web of attachments which involves all of its members and they grow and deepen throughout the years.

The Family, a community of love

This Covenant is a Covenant of Love. These personal attachments are attachments of love. Love is the secret force which moves everything. It motivates everything, it makes everything fertile. The center of the family is love; what is decisive is love; the foundation of the family is love.

As a response to a world without love, we want to form in the interior of our families a new community, a community filled with love. Through our families, we want to forge a new man/woman, a man/woman moved by love. The responsibility belongs to each one personally. If I want my family to be a community of love, then I have to strive to give love. I have to educate myself for it. I have to take the first step: me, father, mother, son, daughter.....

Questions for reflection

1. Where can I strive to improve?
2. What steps can I take to deepen that family Covenant in my home?
3. Are we a Marian family?

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