

Reflections

Father Nicolas Schwizer

82 – May 1, 2010

Marriage is a vocation

The most beautiful pages of the Bible are those which speak of the different calls from God (Exodus 3, Isaiah 6, Jeremiah 1, among others). “I have called you by your name.” He tells Isaiah. Likewise it was God who awakened love between the spouses. It was Jesus Christ who also said to his apostles “Come and follow Me.” In the same manner, spouses were called to follow Him. The difference was that they were called by two.

Every call implies that God is the one who **chooses and assigns a determined task** in benefit of others. God has called them to be an image of the Love of Christ for mankind.....to be the channel by which that love goes to the spouse, to the children, and to the entire world. From all eternity, He thought of them united (JR 1, 5). As members of a parish, of a Movement, this election and our apostolic vocation become ever more clear. He needs us in order to save families and to collaborate in the building of the Kingdom of God.

Every call is **free**, by no merits of its own. God chooses the small for great tasks. In this way also, we are aware of our smallness and our limitations so that our spousal love is a reflection of the love Christ has for His Church.

We also see our limitations in the task of educating and leading, as priests, our children to God. “Father, Lord of heaven and earth! I thank you because you have shown to the unlearned what you have hidden from the wise and learned” (MT 11, 25).

In every call, there is a **personal encounter** with Him who calls (JN 1, 35-51). Perhaps at the moment of our marriage we did not know of this call nor did we know Him who was calling us. We only saw the spouse. “Come and see” (JN 1, 39). Perhaps with the passing of time we have discovered Christ more deeply or we sense the greatness of the love of God in our lives.

For every call there is a **response** without losing time... (MT 21, 22), there are no more excuses; suddenly it does not coincide with our plans (MT 19, 16-26 the rich young man). Every call implies a radical and unconditional response.

Where the call is, the grace is also there. Every call brings with it a **promise**. The condition for fulfilling the promise is fidelity in trials and difficulties. We listen to the angel at the Annunciation: “Do not fear, Mary, for you have found favor with God...” What happens is that often we do not trust and we do not seek the sacramental grace of our marriage.

Marriage is a call **to sanctity as a couple**. “Come and follow Me.” In her thinking, the Church has still not changed her concept of married life as a way to sanctity. Father Kentenich, the Founder of the Schoenstatt Movement, strives against this mentality and invites us to develop a lay spirituality on the way to sanctity where married life, sexuality, work, and education of the children have a particular place. Marriage is a **“superior school of love”** and there should be a holy competition between those consecrated and those married... to see who arrives first to sanctity and to the fullness of love. Everything in marriage can be a way to sanctity.

On the other hand, all human love will sooner or later disillusion us and becomes a **diving board** which leads us to find a deeper shelter in God. For that, God places difficulties in our marriage... to educate us in love. There is much which has to be polished and much to which we must become unattached.

Questions for reflection

1. What does this text say to me?
2. Did I ever think of sanctity for two?
3. What is the value and the meaning of disillusion?

If you wish to subscribe, comment on the text or give your testimony, write to:

pn.reflexiones@gmail.com

Translation: Carlos Cantú Schoenstatt Family Federation La Feria, Texas USA 040610.

<http://cmsms.schoenstatt.de/en/resources/periodicals/virtual-retreat.htm>