

# Reflections

Father Nicolas Schwizer

# 90 – September 1, 2010

## Obstacles on the way to the Father

There is no doubt that many countries possess a great love for the Blessed Virgin. But it is obvious that some communities which are so Marian, do not manifest the same sense of a profound personal attachment to the Father of Christ. And it is often the case that someone severed their relationship to God, became an atheist, but still maintains a relationship with the Virgin. It seems to be the last thing which is lost.

The reason for this situation is not difficult to understand if we look closely at the reality of the family. Often, the father in many families is a very weak figure. In comparison to the mother, he is almost a stranger. He is absent from the home throughout the entire day, and in general, he lacks the ability for personal dialog with his loved ones. His way of acting is normally distant and hard. In popular sectors he is the one who yells and hits; he is the one who is authoritarian and unjust with the children; he is the one who is alcoholic and therefore mistreats the mother.

In the middle class and higher class, the fatherhood crisis is not so much expressed in violence. There, the father is usually the great absentee from the home: the one who is always occupied with important things which do not leave him time for the children. He believes that his paternal function means to work for his family, to give things to his loved ones. How many children do not clearly make it known that they would prefer to have less money, and instead have a father who is nearby!

For many, the word “father” is only a word which evokes rebellion and frustration. We cannot say to youths who are wounded or frustrated by an absent or violent father: I have good news for you: God is Father and He loves you. For youths who reject their father or try to flee from him, that good news of the Father God becomes bad news.

Therefore, Father Kentenich, founder of the Schoenstatt Movement, affirms that we live like the prodigal son in “a state of flight from the house of the Father.” In his opinion, the problem of modern atheism is due in the first place to the crisis of the family. “Times without fathers are times without God.”

## Father crisis, crisis of authority

The deepest cause of the crisis of authority resides here, in society as in the Church. Ultimately it is about the rejection of authority which modern man identifies with his own father. The deterioration of authority in the family leads him to consider any authority as abusive and oppressive. Modern man thinks that what is proper to authority is to “order (rule).” In a culture of efficiency, that is what authority becomes: ordering because the order is quickest.

But the function of true authority is to give life, to help grow. The model of that authority is the Almighty Father God and his reflection, the Good Shepherd. Therefore, orders are not given to the newborn child. He/she is simply clothed, fed, and caressed. He/she is shown/taught.

No one teaches a child to walk by giving him/her orders, rather, the child is taken by the hand and is encouraged. Ordering only has meaning if it helps to grow. Authority, any authority can only be justified if it is at the service of life, as a source of life.

In light of this vision, the present concept of authority is very poor! At all levels, human authority has strayed from its model, the Father God. Those who should reflect Him – on the religious level, political, labor and family – do not reflect Him. Therefore, the words “father” or “authority” for many persons sound empty or cause them to reject them.

How must it feel for them to hear the news of a Providential Father who always sees us and who with infinite power has us at hand’s reach? Without a doubt, it must be the worst and most depressing news they could hear.

## Questions for reflection

1. Do I offer my privileged time to my family?
2. How was my relationship with my natural father?
3. Is it easy for me to attach myself to the Father God?

If you wish to subscribe, comment on the text or give your testimony, write to: [pn.reflexiones@gmail.com](mailto:pn.reflexiones@gmail.com)

Translation: Carlos Cantú Schoenstatt Family Federation La Feria, Texas USA 080810.

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