



27. December 2020

**Third Christmas Meditation
“The Holy Family”**

The primordial cell of human community, the family, has been strengthened by God the Father through the birth of His Son into a human family and has set its example for us. With His incarnation, God wanted to penetrate all spheres of existence, and the family is first and foremost in an excellent position.

The love between man and woman, so aptly described by Saint Paul, allows us to glimpse the mystery of the love between God and the soul (*cf. Eph 5,24-25.32*). The natural attraction between the two persons reminds us how there is a love attraction between God and us. God loves us and the soul loves God! When the union of love between God and us takes place, new life is born, life from God! In the same way, in the love between man and woman, new life, the child, is born.

Even if in today's world we are often far away from this original plan of God, it remains valid and shines brightly in the Holy family. Here, however, there is also the peculiarity that the divine Child, although born naturally, was conceived by Mary through the Holy Spirit.

What can this tell us about the human family?

In the sanctification of the family through the presence of the divine Child, natural marriage, which is in accordance with God's plan of creation, is elevated. It now no longer takes its place only in God's order of creation, but also in God's order of redemption. Since Christian marriage is deeply embedded in the life of the Church, the task of parents is now growing, not only to care for the natural conditions of their children's lives and give them a home, but the most excellent obligation is that the children receive the Catholic faith and that this faith can grow and mature. This is why we like to speak of a domestic church, which should be realized by the families.

This requires a great attention on the part of the parents as to whether, through God's grace on the children, vocations can grow up which serve the Church in a special way as priests and religious. Sanctified families, in which the sacramental grace has its full effect, become missionary signs and lay the foundation for the sanctification and healing of other families!

The fact that God has entrusted the birth of His Son to a human family makes us aware of their dignity and, connected with it, their supernatural task. It is to become the spiritual place where life matures, which bears witness to the Son of God in this world!

This was the case with the Holy Family, and it should be the case with all those families who have been reborn through Holy Baptism and wish to correspond to their God-given mission in the sacrament of marriage.