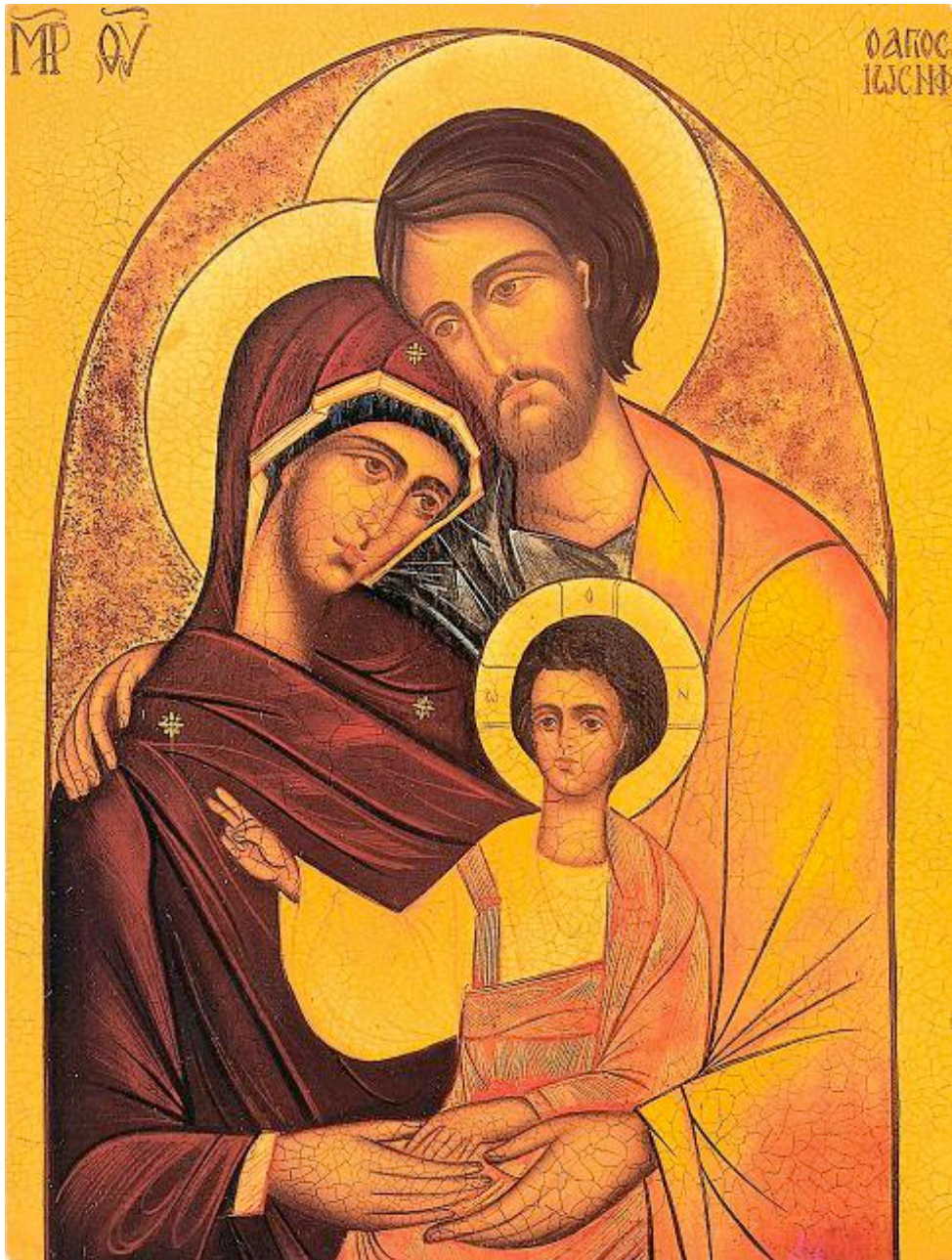


Novena to the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph



Days 1-3: Reflections on God's Love
Days 4-6: Reflections on Married Love
Days 7-9: Reflections on Family Love

Conclude each day with the following:

Consecration of the family to the Sacred Heart of Jesus
and the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Most Holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary, united in perfect love, as you look upon us with mercy and caring, we consecrate our hearts, our lives, our family to you. We know the beautiful example of your home in Nazareth was meant to be a model for each of our families. We hope to have, with your help, the unity and strong, enduring love you gave to one another.

May our home be filled with joy. May sincere affection, patience, tolerance and mutual respect be freely given to all. May our prayers be filled with the needs of others, not just ourselves and may we always be close to your sacraments. Bless those who are present, as well as those who are absent, both the living and the dead; may peace be among us and when we are tested, grant us the Christian acceptance of God's will.

Keep our family close to your Hearts, may your special protection be with us always.
Most Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, hear our prayers. Amen.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, Pray for us

OR

Prayer for the Family (Pope John Paul II)

Lord God, from you every family in heaven and on earth takes its name.

Father, you are Love and Life.

Through your Son, Jesus Christ, born of woman, and through the Holy Spirit, fountain of divine charity, grant that every family on earth may become for each successive generation a true shrine of life and love.

Grant that your grace may guide the thoughts and actions of husbands and wives for the good of their families and of all the families in the world.

Grant that the young may find in the family solid support for their human dignity and for their growth in truth and love.

Grant that love, strengthened by the grace of the sacrament of marriage, may prove mightier than all the weakness and trials through which our families sometimes pass.

Through the intercession of the Holy Family of Nazareth, grant that the Church may fruitfully carry out her worldwide mission in the family and through the family.

Through Christ our Lord, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life for ever and ever.

Amen.+

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, Pray for us

Sign of the Cross...Father, help us to live as the holy family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Holy Mary, Mother of God, you have given the world its true light: Jesus, your Son – the Son of God. You abandoned yourself completely to God's call and thus became a wellspring of the goodness which flows forth from him. Show us Jesus. Lead us to Him. Teach us to know and love him, so that we too can become capable of true love and be fountains of living water in the midst of a thirsting world. May the Divine Will of God be lived out in our family. Amen

READING 1 Corinthians 13: 4-8

Love is always patient and kind; love is never jealous; love is not boastful or conceited, it is never rude and never seeks its own advantage, it does not take offence or store up grievances. Love does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but finds its joy in the truth. It is always ready to make allowances, to trust, to hope and to endure whatever comes. Love never comes to an end.

PSALM 103: 11-13

For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is God's love for those who fear him;
as far as the east is from the west,
so far has he removed our transgressions from us.
As a father has compassion on his children,
so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him.

GOSPEL John 3:14-17

As Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so must the Son of man be lifted up so that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him. For this is how God loved the world: he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. For God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but so that through him the world might be saved.

REFLECTION Benedict XVI *Deus caritas est.* 39

Faith, which sees the love of God revealed in the pierced heart of Jesus on the Cross, gives rise to love. Love is the light-and in the end, the only light- that can always illuminate a world grown dim and give us the courage needed to keep living and working. Love is possible, and we are able to practise it because we are created in the image of God. To experience love and in this way to cause the light of God to enter into the world-this is the invitation.

Sign of the Cross...Father, help us to live as the holy family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Holy Mary, Mother of God, you have given the world its true light: Jesus, your Son – the Son of God. You abandoned yourself completely to God's call and thus became a wellspring of the goodness which flows forth from him. Show us Jesus. Lead us to Him. Teach us to know and love him, so that we too can become capable of true love and be fountains of living water in the midst of a thirsting world. May the Divine Will of God be lived out in our family. Amen

READING Ephesians 3: 14-21

This, then is what I pray, kneeling before the Father, from whom every fatherhood, in heaven or on earth, takes its name. In the abundance of his glory may he, through his Spirit, enable you to grow firm in power with regard to your inner self, so that Christ may live in your hearts through faith, and then, planted in love and built on love, with all Gods holy people you will have the strength to grasp the breadth and the length, the height and the depth; so that, knowing the love of Christ, which is beyond all knowledge, you may be filled with the utter fullness of God.

PSALM 23: 1-4

The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing.
He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,
he refreshes my soul.
He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake.
Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

GOSPEL Luke 1:46-55

And Mary said:
"My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant.
From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me- holy is his name.
His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation.
He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.
He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble.
He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty.
He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as he promised our ancestors."

REFLECTION Benedict XVI *Deus caritas est.* 39

Faith, hope and charity go together. Hope is practiced through the virtue of patience, which continues to do good even in the face of apparent failure, and through the virtue of humility, which accepts God's mystery and trusts him even at times of darkness. Faith tells us that God has given his Son for our sakes and gives us the victorious certainty that it is really true: God is love! It thus transforms our impatience and our doubts into the sure hope that God holds the world in his hands and that, as the dramatic imagery of the end of the Book of Revelation points out, in spite of all darkness he ultimately triumphs in glory.

Sign of the Cross...Father, help us to live as the holy family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Holy Mary, Mother of God, you have given the world its true light: Jesus, your Son – the Son of God. You abandoned yourself completely to God's call and thus became a wellspring of the goodness which flows forth from him. Show us Jesus. Lead us to Him. Teach us to know and love him, so that we too can become capable of true love and be fountains of living water in the midst of a thirsting world. May the Divine Will of God be lived out in our family. Amen

READING Philippians 4:6-8

Never worry about anything; but tell God all your desires of every kind in prayer and petition shot through with gratitude, and the peace of God which is beyond our understanding will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers, let your minds be filled with everything that is true, everything that is honourable, everything that is upright and pure, everything that we love and admire – with whatever is good and praiseworthy.

PSALM 37:3-7

Trust in the LORD and do good;
 dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.
 Take delight in the LORD,
 and he will give you the desires of your heart.
 Commit your way to the LORD;
 trust in him and he will do this:
 He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn,
 your vindication like the noonday sun.
 Be still before the LORD
 and wait patiently for him;
 do not fret when people succeed in their ways,
 when they carry out their wicked schemes.

GOSPEL Matthew 11 : 25-30

At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do.

"All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

REFLECTION Benedict XVI *Deus caritas est.* 39

In Jesus Christ, it is God himself who goes in search of the "stray sheep", a suffering and lost humanity...His death on the Cross is the culmination of that turning of God against himself in which he gives himself in order to raise man up and save him. This is love in its most radical form. By contemplating the pierced side of Christ, we can understand the starting point (that) : "God is love." It is there that this truth can be contemplated. It is from there that our definition of love must begin.

Sign of the Cross...Father, help us to live as the holy family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. We pray you help our love be unselfish and complete, as we share everything with one another, without keeping anything back, without measuring how much we are going to give, each of us loving for the sake of the other, each glad to make the other happy by giving oneself. Lord, keep us faithful in our love until death. Help us to refuse our married love to everyone else as we promised on the day we were married. Amen

READING Tobit 8:4-8

(Tobias & Sarah prayed):“ You are blessed, O God of our fathers: blessed too is your name for ever and ever. Let the heavens bless you and all things you have made for evermore. You it was who created Adam, you who created Eve his wife to be his help and support: From these two the human race was born. You it was who said, ‘It is not right that the man should be alone ; let us make him a helper like him’. And so I take my sister not for any lustful motive, but I do it in singleness of heart. Be kind enough to have pity on her and on me and bring us to old age together.”

PSALM 128: 1-6

Blessed are all who fear the LORD,
who walk in obedience to him.
You will eat the fruit of your labor;
blessings and prosperity will be yours.
Your wife will be like a fruitful vine
within your house;
your children will be like olive shoots
around your table.
Yes, this will be the blessing
for the man who fears the LORD.
May the LORD bless you from Zion;
may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem
all the days of your life.
May you live to see your children’s children—
peace be on Israel.

GOSPEL Matthew 19:4-6

Jesus answered: “Have you not read that the Creator from the beginning ‘made them male and female’ and that he said: ‘that is why a man leaves his father and mother and becomes attached to his wife, and the two become one flesh’. So then, what God has united, human beings must not divide.”

REFLECTION Tertullian of *Familiaris Consortio* 13

How can I ever express the happiness of a marriage joined by the Church, strengthened by an offering, sealed by a blessing, announced by angels, and ratified by the Father?...How wonderful the bond between two believers, now one in hope, one in desire, one in discipline, one in the same service! They are both children of one Father and servants of the same Master, undivided in spirit and flesh, truly two in one flesh. Where the flesh is one, one also is the spirit.

Sign of the Cross...Father, help us to live as the holy family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. We pray you help our love be unselfish and complete, as we share everything with one another, without keeping anything back, without measuring how much we are going to give, each of us loving for the sake of the other, each glad to make the other happy by giving oneself. Lord, keep us faithful in our love until death. Help us to refuse our married love to everyone else as we promised on the day we were married. Amen

READING Ephesians 5:25-33

Husbands must love their wives as they love their own bodies; for a man to love his wife is for him to love himself. A man never hates his own body, but he feeds it and looks after it; and that is the way Christ treats the Church, because we are parts of his Body. This is why a man leaves his father and mother and becomes attached to his wife, and the two become one flesh. This mystery has great significance, but I am applying it to Christ and the Church. To sum up: you also, each one of you, must love his wife as he loves himself; and let every wife respect her husband.

Psalm 127: 1-5

Unless the LORD builds the house,
the builders labor in vain.
Unless the LORD watches over the city,
the guards stand watch in vain.
In vain you rise early
and stay up late,
toiling for food to eat—
for he grants sleep to those he loves.
Children are a heritage from the LORD,
offspring a reward from him.
Like arrows in the hands of a warrior
are children born in one's youth.
Blessed is the man
whose quiver is full of them.
They will not be put to shame
when they contend with their opponents in court.

GOSPEL Matthew 2:13-15

Suddenly the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother with you, and escape into Egypt, and stay there until I tell you, because Herod intends to search for the child and do away with him." So Joseph got up and taking the child and his mother with him, left that night for Egypt, where he stayed until Herod was dead.

REFLECTION John Paul II: *Familiaris Consortio* 25

Love for his wife as mother of their children and love for the children themselves are for the man the natural way of understanding and fulfilling his own fatherhood. ..In revealing and in reliving on earth the very fatherhood of God, a man is called upon to ensure the harmonious and united development of all members of the family: he will perform this task by exercising generous responsibility for the life conceived under the heart of the mother, by a more solicitous commitment to education, a task which he shares with his wife, by work which is never a cause of division in the family but promotes its unity and stability, and by means of the witness he gives of an adult Christian life which effectively introduces the children into the living experience of Christ and the Church.

Sign of the Cross...Father, help us to live as the holy family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. We pray you help our love be unselfish and complete, as we share everything with one another, without keeping anything back, without measuring how much we are going to give, each of us loving for the sake of the other, each glad to make the other happy by giving oneself. Lord, keep us faithful in our love until death. Help us to refuse our married love to everyone else as we promised on the day we were married. Amen

READING Proverbs 31: 10-12, 25-31

A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies. Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value. She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life...She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come. She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: "Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all." Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised. Honor her for all that her hands have done, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate.

PSALM 131: 1-3

My heart is not proud, LORD,
my eyes are not haughty;
I do not concern myself with great matters
or things too wonderful for me.
But I have calmed and quieted myself,
I am like a weaned child with its mother;
like a weaned child I am content.
Israel, put your hope in the LORD
both now and forevermore

GOSPEL John 2:1-5

On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee. The mother of Jesus was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited. And they ran out of wine, since the wine provided for the feast had all been used, and the mother of Jesus said to him, "they have no wine". Jesus said, "Woman what do you want from me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants "Do whatever He tells you."

REFLECTION Catechism of the Catholic Church 1613

On the threshold of his public life Jesus performs his first sign- at his mother's request- during a wedding feast. The Church attaches great importance to Jesus' presence at the wedding at Cana. She sees in it the confirmation of the goodness of marriage and the proclamation that thenceforth marriage will be an efficacious sign of Christ's presence.

Sign of the Cross...Father, help us to live as the holy family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Heavenly Father, from whom all parenthood comes, help us to grow in gratitude, love and respect towards our parents, whom by the gift of life, have brought us into the world and enabled us to grow. Teach us to understand our children so that they may grow in your wisdom and love according to your holy will: to be the best parents that we can, to model our parenthood on the parenthood of God, and to follow the example of Mary and Joseph. Amen

READING Jeremiah 1: 4-8

The word of the LORD came to me, saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations." "Alas, Sovereign LORD," I said, "I do not know how to speak; I am too young." But the LORD said to me, "Do not say, 'I am too young.' You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you," declares the LORD.

PSALM 139: 13 – 16

For you created my inmost being;
 you knit me together in my mother's womb.
 I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
 your works are wonderful,
 I know that full well.
 My frame was not hidden from you
 when I was made in the secret place,
 when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.
 Your eyes saw my unformed body;
 all the days ordained for me were written in your book
 before one of them came to be.

GOSPEL Matthew 18:5-6,10

At this time the disciples came to Jesus and said "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" So he called a little child to him whom he set among them. Then he said, "In truth I tell you, unless you change and become like little children you will never enter the kingdom of Heaven. And so, the one who makes himself as little as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of Heaven. 'Anyone who welcomes one little child like this in my name welcomes me. But anyone who is the downfall of one of these little ones who have faith in me would be better drowned in the depths of the sea with a great millstone round his neck. ...See that you never despise any of these little ones, for I tell you that their angels in heaven are continually in the presence of my Father in heaven.'

REFLECTION John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae* 92

As the domestic church, the family is summoned to proclaim, celebrate and serve the Gospel of life. This is a responsibility which first concerns married couples, called to be givers of life, on the basis of an ever greater awareness of the meaning of procreation as a unique event which clearly reveals that human life is a gift received in order then to be given as a gift. In giving origin to a new life, parents recognize that the child, "as the fruit of their mutual gift of love, is, in turn, a gift for both of them, a gift which flows from them". It is above all in raising children that the family fulfils its mission to proclaim the Gospel of life.

Sign of the Cross...Father, help us to live as the holy family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Heavenly Father, from whom all parenthood comes, help us to grow in gratitude, love and respect towards our parents, whom by the gift of life, have brought us into the world and enabled us to grow. Teach us to understand our children so that they may grow in your wisdom and love according to your holy will: to be the best parents that we can, to model our parenthood on the parenthood of God, and to follow the example of Mary and Joseph. Amen

READING Colossians 3: 12-15

You are God's chosen race, his saints; he loves you, and you should be clothed in sincere compassion, in kindness and humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one another; forgive each other as soon as a quarrel begins. The Lord has forgiven you; now you must do the same. Over all these clothes, to keep them together and complete them, put on love. And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, because it is for this that you were called together as parts of one body. Always be thankful.

PSALM 112: 1-5

Blessed are those who fear the LORD,
who find great delight in his commands.
Their children will be mighty in the land;
the generation of the upright will be blessed.
Wealth and riches are in their houses,
and their righteousness endures forever.
Even in darkness light dawns for the upright,
for those who are gracious and compassionate and righteous.
Good will come to those who are generous and lend freely,
who conduct their affairs with justice.

GOSPEL Luke 2:51-52

He went down with them then and came to Nazareth and lived under their authority. His mother stored up all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom, in stature, and in favour with God and with people.

REFLECTION Vatican II, *Gravissimum Educationis* 3

As it is the parents who have given life to their children, on them lies the gravest obligation of educating their family. They must therefore be recognized as being primarily and principally responsible for their education. The role of parents in education is of such importance that it is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute.

Sign of the Cross...Father, help us to live as the holy family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Heavenly Father, from whom all parenthood comes, help us to grow in gratitude, love and respect towards our parents, whom by the gift of life, have brought us into the world and enabled us to grow. Teach us to understand our children so that they may grow in your wisdom and love according to your holy will: to be the best parents that we can, to model our parenthood on the parenthood of God, and to follow the example of Mary and Joseph. Amen

READING Colossians 3: 16-21

Let the message of Christ, in all its richness, find a home with you. Teach each other, and advise each other, in all wisdom. With gratitude in your hearts sing psalms and hymns and inspired songs to God; and never say or do anything except in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Wives, give way to your husbands, as you should in the Lord.

Husbands, love your wives and treat them with gentleness. Children, be obedient to your parents always, because that is what will please the Lord. Parents, never drive your children to resentment or you will make them feel frustrated.

PSALM 25: 1-10

In you, LORD my God, I put my trust.

I trust in you; do not let me be put to shame,
nor let my enemies triumph over me.

No one who hopes in you will ever be put to shame,
but shame will come on those who are treacherous without cause.

Show me your ways, LORD, teach me your paths.

Guide me in your truth and teach me,

for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long.

Remember, LORD, your great mercy and love,
for they are from of old.

Do not remember the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways;
according to your love remember me, for you, LORD, are good.

Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in his ways.

He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way.

All the ways of the LORD are loving and faithful
toward those who keep the demands of his covenant.

GOSPEL Mark 3: 31-35

Then Jesus' mother and brothers arrived. Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him. A crowd was sitting around him, and they told him, "Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you."

"Who are my mother and my brothers?" he asked. Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother."

REFLECTION John Paul II: *Familiaris Consortio* 17

The family finds in the plan of God the Creator and Redeemer not only its identity, what it is, but also its mission, what it can and should do. The role that God calls the family to perform in history derives from what the family is...Each family finds within itself a summons that cannot be ignored, and that specifies both its dignity and responsibility: family, become what you are.

Books we love:

Holy Bible

Catechism of the Catholic Church

Devotions to St Joseph by Brian Moore www.stpauls.com.au

Only Heroic Catholic Families will Survive by Fr Robert J. Fox www.fatimafamily.org

Character Building by David Isaacs www.bookdepository.co.uk

Catholic Education: Homeward Bound by Kimberley Hahn

Be A Man! by Fr Larry Richards

Happy are you poor: The simple life and spiritual freedom by Thomas Dubay, S.M

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