



3 July 2022

HOLY HOUR

(The Power of Love and Relationships in the Family)

Hymn: Whilst the Blessed Sacrament is being exposed.

O Sacrament Most Holy. *(Joyful Celebration: No 301)*

We have gathered today to spend some time with the Lord and to seek his Grace to strengthen our families. We will begin this holy half hour with an opening prayer.

Opening Prayer:

O Triune God, you are a God of three persons and live as a family. As we spend time with you today, help us to open our hearts and lives to you.

Hymn: Just to Fix Our Eyes On Jesus. *(Joyful Celebration: No 232 - 1st two verses)*

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 4: 31- 33

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

(Pause for a moment after the scripture reading)

Reflection:

God created all of us out of love and called everyone to Love ourselves and others. That is our God given vocation in this world. The God that we profess is a Triune God that constantly lives in communion and relationship with each other. So we too are called to live in Communion and relationship with each other starting with our families. That is how our love will grow and we will fulfil God's mission for us in this world through relationships.

Everyone has an emotional need for love which is not just a childhood phenomenon. It follows us into adulthood and into marriage. Initially when we fall in love that need is temporarily met but later on as we come down from that high, this emotional need for love resurfaces as this is fundamental to our nature and so we realise we will need love as long as we live.

In marriage it is natural to feel the need to be loved by our spouse. Couples often share that providing material comforts and luxuries cannot replace emotional love. Nor can love be felt in sexual intimacy if we have ignored each other all day.

So how do we make this real genuine love a reality in our families?

Our home needs to be governed by LOVE and not a set of RULES and regulations. A place that would draw our children and grandchildren and extended family members to want to be together and spend their time

together. To the extent that, we now accept each other with our frailties and weaknesses, and learn to forgive and love each other every day, the way Christ called us to, this can slowly become a reality. Dying to ourselves and our ego, our needs, and expectations, working and contributing for the good of each other are some ways of making this possible. That is when, everyone at home will feel that Christ is our unseen guest and the silent listener present in our home. Everyone will feel the SPIRIT OF GOD hovering in our home as if we are in the shadow of God.

Pope Francis in his encyclical *Amoris Laetitia* talks about how the challenges, the frailties, the weaknesses, and limitations can be opportunities for us to heal and grow in relationship with each other in the family, starting with the spouses. The way we accept each other as we are and still are able to love we will become signs of God's unconditional love in the family. By our forgiveness we become Balms of Mercy to soothe the wounds and make each other feel accepted and welcomed in the family. No matter what the challenges are, at the end of the day, we need to keep the channels of communication open, talk about it or seek help together if necessary but ensure that there is peace eventually. The environment we create at home will be the best fertiliser for all of us to grow. This loving and peaceful atmosphere in the home is the best gift we can give to each other and our children and extended members of our family. The best legacy that we leave behind in our families.

All this may seem a tall order but if you ask any married couple or family that you perceive as very happy, you will realise that they draw strength from their personal relationship with God and get support to live out this calling to love others by belonging to some group in the parish that helps build their faith and relationships in the family. Most of them will tell you that no matter what the differences between them or the pain felt, they made efforts to heal the relationship before the end of the day and did not let it get carried forward to the next day. As the saying goes, "*Do not let the sun go down on your anger*"

Pause for a few moments and reflect on any relationship in the family that God is calling you to heal. It is not whether you are right or wrong that you are called to heal the relationship but rather ask God how He wants you to be His instrument of Unconditional Love and Mercy in that situation and in that relationship.

(Silent Reflection for at least two to three minutes)

General Intercessions:

Leader:

Loving Father you created all of us to be your instruments of Love. Give us your Grace as we place before you our needs and frailties in our families.

Response: *O Lord, hear us we pray; O Lord teach us to love. (Response can be sung)*

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the gift of our family members. We remember our parents and grandparents and extended families who passed on strong faith and values through their lives. We pray for those already with you and those now frail, weak, and lonely. Help us to make good choices for others and like them to be a source of light and love to others starting with our family members. **R/-**

Loving God, guide me and give me your strength to care for my family the way you would like me to. You know that I love them but at times I get overwhelmed and say and do the wrong things. Lord in my weakness, you be my Light, show me your ways to be Your soothing balm of Love and Mercy in the family. **R/-**

We pray for all parents, especially those struggling to bring up their children single handedly. They face so many challenges as they strive to make ends meet and provide for the education and needs of their children. Comfort them in their moments of anxiety and guide them to make their home a domestic church where your love and hope prevails. **R/-**

We remember our dear children and grandchildren which are a special gift to us from You. Due to the Pandemic our children have faced many challenges and have even been deprived of their childhood. As teens they are often being led by the values and ways of the world. They are struggling in many ways. Help all of us to make our homes, our neighbourhood, and our parishes, a place where Your light and love will lead them in the path that you would like them to go. **R/-**

Lord we place before you families that are facing challenges and are hurting and are broken in some way. It is so difficult to understand the situation. We cannot make sense of what is happening. Lord, carry us in your arms and help us to rest in your presence and love so that your peace will reign in our hearts and in our homes despite the challenges.

Lord we bring before you families that have lost their loved ones who were so close to their hearts. Be with them and comfort them in their moments of loneliness and pain. Strengthen them with your love. **R/-**

Let us pause for a moment in silence and place our own needs in our families. **R/-**

We will now spend some time adoring our Lord in our hearts.

Adoration hymn: *(to be sung very slowly)*

Father, We Adore You *(Joyful Celebration: No 122)*

Let us pause for a few minutes in silence as we allow God's Spirit to speak to us.

Benediction:

Prayer at Benediction: Loving Father, You will that all of us, who you have created out, should be your instruments of Love in this world. May your Spirit, lead, guide and strengthen us to be your reflection of Love and Compassion starting with those closest to us in our families, helping us build relationships at home, thus making the world a loving and peaceful place, to continue the saving work of Jesus everywhere until the end of the world. Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Divine Praises *(Joyful Celebration No 14)*

Concluding Prayer:

Thank you Lord, for this very special time with you, where we could open our hearts to you. May God's Spirit continue to guide, protect and lead us to make our families and our homes a reflection of your love in this world. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Closing Hymn:

O Sacrament Most Holy *(Joyful Celebration: no 301)*

Whilst the Blessed Sacrament is being returned to the Tabernacle.

Contributed by:

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(Deacon Jaime is a permanent deacon ordained in April 2009 and currently serving in Sacred Heart Parish, Santa Cruz West, Mumbai.)

