

***PARENTS,
PEACE!***

Andrew Jerome Yeung

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PEACE!***

Tenth edition

By
Andrew Jerome Yeung

Parents, Peace!

10th ed.

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FIRST SECTION - GENERAL AFFAIRS

From the Vatican, November 20, 2000

Dear Mr. Yeung,

The Holy Father wishes me to express his gratitude for the copy of your book "Parents, Peace!", which you sent to him. He very much appreciates the devoted sentiments which prompted your gesture.

His Holiness asks our Lord Jesus Christ to sustain you in his grace and to fill you with his peace.

I am also pleased to convey to you the Apostolic Blessing.

Sincerely yours,



Monsignor Pedro López Quintana
Assessor

Foreword

By Rev. Fr. Thomas R. Harding, B.A., M.A., Ph.D.,
Priest in the Archdiocese of Toronto.

I first met Andrew Jerome Yeung some years ago when he visited Prince of Peace Church where my brother, Fr. William F. Harding, was pastor. On that occasion Andrew gave every parishioner a copy of his first book. As the years went by I got better acquainted with him, especially through the game of golf.

It was only last Saturday that I met his whole family at St. Bonaventure's Church in Toronto on the day of the Mass of the Resurrection for his dear mother, Dr. Cissy Yeung, who had entered eternal life soon after her ninetieth birthday. Her husband, Dr. George Yeung, had pre-deceased her by a decade and a half. I was greatly impressed by the Yeung family. The elder couple had been very devout Catholics. Andrew and his brothers and sisters, the children and the grandchildren, had many things in common. First of all, they live their faith in a beautiful way. Secondly, they are doctors, teachers and professional people who serve their respective communities in an unselfish and dedicated manner.

I was not surprised then that Andrew wrote *PARENTS, PEACE!* in order to share his experience with his fellow parents. I was honoured when he asked me to write the Foreword to this wonderful book. I have found it to be faithful to the teaching of the

Catholic Church, to Sacred Scripture, Tradition, Catholic Theology, and the writings of His Holiness Pope John Paul II. This is an excellent work on the raising of children through faith, hope and love, on Christian family life and marriage, and the importance of prayer.

I recommend it whole-heartedly.

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CHAPTER ONE

CROSSING THE THRESHOLD OF HOPE

Parents who fear desperately for their children's spiritual well-being in this age of immorality are very difficult to reach and console. What can one say to fathers and mothers who worry day and night over the sinfulness of their sons and daughters, and who lose all sense of peace when they see the evils that plague the world today? Who is convincing enough to alleviate the dejection of parents suffering from utter despair? To whose authoritative voice will they listen?

The Vicar of Christ may be able to provide some assistance in this matter! In the book *CROSSING THE THRESHOLD OF HOPE* by His Holiness John Paul II (Messori, V., ed., Alfred A. Knopf Canada, Toronto, 1994), one can uncover gems of insight and wisdom that may bring solace and direction to parents who are completely devoid of hope for their loved ones.

The rest of Chapter One, except for this opening section and the Closing Prayer, contains excerpts taken from the book written by this great 21st century saint. The number in brackets after each selection is the page on which the citation is found in his book. Quotation marks are purposely omitted so as not to distract the reader or to impede the flow of thought. The texts chosen are self-explanatory, and no commentaries are

necessary. I would not want, in any case, through personal interpretation, to dilute or alter the meaning of the saintly Pontiff's teachings. It is only by way of introduction that I make three brief remarks below.

First, the Holy Father bases some of his theological theses on part of St. Paul's speech about God, a speech he gave at the Areopagus in Athens, Greece. The discourse is reported in the *Acts of the Apostles* and mentioned in the Pope's book but the actual paragraph does not appear there. For the sake of convenience to the reader, it is presented here.

“From one single principle he not only created the whole human race so that they could occupy the entire earth, but he decreed the times and limits of their habitation. And he did this so that they might seek the deity and, by feeling their way towards him, succeed in finding him; and indeed he is not far from any of us, since it is in him that we live, and move, and exist, as indeed some of your own writers have said: We are his children.” (Acts 17:26–28, NJB)

Second, His Holiness emphasizes the importance of the parable of the Prodigal Son. The parable is found in the Gospel according to Luke, chapter 15, verses 11 to 32. The reader should spend some quality time meditating on it.

Lastly, it should be noted that, while the Holy Father speaks in glowing terms concerning Jesus' marvelous achievement in redeeming humankind from sin, he is not saying it is alright to sin or that we do nothing to stop the spread of sin and evil. Far from it!

To dispel any misunderstanding on this point, let us now begin quoting directly from his book.

The Pope, like every Christian, must be keenly aware of the dangers to which man is subject in the world, in his temporal future, and in his final, eternal, eschatological future. The awareness of these dangers does not generate pessimism, but rather encourages the struggle for the victory of good in every realm. And it is precisely from this struggle for the victory of good in man and in the world that the need for prayer arises. (23)

Sin, Salvation, Redemption

The world that the Son of man found when He became man deserved condemnation, because of the sin that had dominated all of history, beginning with the fall of our first parents...

Nevertheless, convincing the world of the existence of sin is not the same as condemning it for sinning. "God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him." Convincing the world of sin means creating the conditions for its salvation... To save means to embrace and lift up with redemptive love, with love that is always greater than any sin. In this regard the parable of the prodigal son is an unsurpassable paradigm. (57)

The work of redemption is to elevate the work of creation to a new level. Creation is permeated with a redemptive sanctification, even a divinization. It comes as if drawn to the sphere of the divinity and of the

intimate life of God. In this realm the destructive power of sin is defeated. (22)

The history of salvation is very simple... In a certain sense it is entirely contained in the parable of the prodigal son, or in the words of Christ when He addresses the adulteress: “Neither do I condemn you. Go, [and] from now on do not sin anymore” (Jn 8:11, NAB). (58)

The Young

My most memorable experience of that period, when my pastoral activities concentrated above all on the young, was the discovery of the fundamental importance of youth. What is youth: It is not only a period of life that corresponds to a certain number of years, it is also a time given by Providence to every person and given to him as a responsibility. During that time he searches, like the young man in the Gospel, for answers to basic questions; he searches not only for the meaning of life but also for a concrete way to go about living his life. This is the most fundamental characteristic of youth. Every mentor, beginning with parents, let alone every pastor, must be aware of this characteristic and must know how to identify it in every boy and girl. I will say more: He must love this fundamental aspect of youth. (120)

If at every stage of his life man desires to be his own person, to find love, during his youth he desires it even more strongly. The desire to be one's own person, however, must not be understood as a license to do anything, without exception. The young do not want

that at all – they are willing to be corrected, they want to be told yes or no. They need guides, and they want them close at hand. If they turn to authority figures, they do so because they see in them a wealth of human warmth and a willingness to walk with them along the paths they are following. (121)

After all, young people are always searching for the beauty in love. They want their love to be beautiful. If they give in to weakness, following models of behaviour that can rightly be considered a “scandal in the contemporary world” (and these are, unfortunately widely diffused models), in the depths of their hearts they still desire a beautiful and pure love. This is as true of boys as it is of girls. Ultimately, they know that only God can give them this love. As a result, they are willing to follow Christ, without caring about the sacrifices this may entail. (123)

I would like to sum up by stressing that the young are searching for God, they are searching for the meaning of life, they are searching for definitive answers: “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” (Lk 10:25, NAB). In this search, they cannot help but encounter the Church. (125)

Fear Not

In Redemption we find the most profound basis for the words “Be not afraid!”: “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son” (cf. Jn 3:16). This Son is always present in the history of humanity as Redeemer. The Redemption pervades all of human history, even before Christ, and prepares its

eschatological future. It is the light that “shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it” (Jn 1:5, NAB). The power of Christ’s Cross and Resurrection is greater than any evil which man could or should fear. (219)

Peoples and nations of the entire world need to hear these words. Their conscience needs to grow in the certainty that Someone exists who holds in His hands the destiny of this passing world... And this Someone is Love (cf. 1 Jn 4:8, 16) – Love that became man, Love crucified and risen, Love unceasingly present among men. (222)

God is not someone who remains only outside of the world, content to be in Himself all-knowing and omnipotent. His wisdom and omnipotence are placed, by free choice, at the service of creation. (62)

And so: “Have no fear!” Do not be afraid of God’s mystery; do not be afraid of His love; and do not be afraid of man’s weakness or of his grandeur! Man does not cease to be great, not even in his weakness. (12)

In the end, before Christ Crucified, the man who shares in redemption will have the advantage over the man who sets himself up as an unbending judge of God’s actions in his own life as well as in that of all humanity. (67)

Be Joyful in the Gospel

The Gospel, above all else, is the joy of creation. God, who in creating saw that His creation was good (cf. Gn 1:1–25), is the source of joy for all creatures, and above all for humankind. God the Creator seems to

say of all creation: “It is good that you exist.” And His joy spreads especially through the ‘good news,’ according to which good is greater than all that is evil in the world. Evil, in fact, is neither fundamental nor definitive. This point clearly distinguishes Christianity from all forms of existential pessimism. (20)

This essential joy of creation is, in turn, completed by the joy of salvation, by the joy of redemption. The Gospel, above all, is a great joy for the salvation of man. The Creator of man is also his Redeemer. Salvation not only confronts evil in each of its existing forms in this world but proclaims victory over evil. “I have conquered the world,” says Christ (Jn 16:33, NAB). (21)

To accept the Gospel’s demands means to affirm all of our humanity, to see in it the beauty desired by God, while at the same time recognizing, in light of the power of God Himself, our weaknesses: “What is impossible for human beings is possible for God” (Lk 18:27, NAB). (223)

Prayer

We must look at the immensity of good that has sprung from the mystery of the Incarnation of the Word and, at the same time, not lose sight of the mystery of sin, which is continually expanding. Saint Paul writes that “where sin increased, grace overflowed all the more” (Rom 5:20, NAB).

This profound truth presents a perennial challenge for prayer. It shows how necessary prayer is for the world and for the Church, because in the end it

constitutes the easiest way of making God and His redeeming love present in the world. (23)

Through prayer God reveals Himself above all as Mercy – that is, Love that goes out to those who are suffering, Love that sustains, uplifts, and invites us to trust. The victory of good in the world is united organically with this truth. A person who prays professes such a truth and in a certain sense makes God, who is merciful Love, present in the world. (26)

Hope in God

Generations come and go which have distanced themselves from Christ and the Church, which have accepted a secular model of thinking and living or upon which such a model has been imposed...

Despite all of the losses the Church has suffered, it does not cease to look toward the future with hope. Such hope is a sign of the power of the Spirit. (113)

It is very important to cross the threshold of hope, not to stop before it, but to let oneself be led. (223)

Closing Prayer

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: grant us peace.

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.” (Rom 15:13, RSV)

CHAPTER TWO

DEAR PARENTS

I am writing to you, fathers and mothers, who feel disappointed and ashamed; you have taught your children as well as you know how but they are not yet what you want them to be. I am writing to bring to your attention Scriptural passages that offer guidance. I am writing to remind you to have unequivocal faith in God. He is the one who gave life to your children. He loves them limitlessly. He cares for them most wonderfully.

God the Father

Jesus said, “Call no one on earth your father; you have but one Father in heaven.” (Mt 23:9, NAB) This saying is addressed to parents. You are to remember that ultimately God is the father of your children. In the Song of Moses, these remarks are made about Him:

“Is he not your father who begot you,
the one who made and established you?” (Deut
32:6, NAB)

“You forgot the God who gave you birth.” (Deut
32:18, NAB)

And the psalmist shows his belief in his Creator with this saying: “You formed my inmost being;
you knit me in my mother’s womb.” (Ps 139:13,
NAB)

Just as these words are for you, they are also for your ancestors, and for your offspring.

God is father of his people. And as father he cherishes them all. You hold your children dear, but so does God, much more than you can imagine! And much more genuinely; for your 'love' and 'concern' may be tinted with self-centred anxieties. God's affection is pure and true.

The Love of God

You can gain some insight into the wondrous compassion of God in the story of the Prodigal Son. (Lk 15:11–24) You can also witness his mercy in the account of the woman taken in adultery. (Jn 8:3–11) I invite you to read these two passages again and to ponder them with fresh eyes, keeping in mind Jesus' command: "Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and there will be gifts for you." (Lk 6:37–38, NJB)

In your meditation, please keep in mind also that God's sense of justice is unlike ours. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Is 55:8–9, RSV) "Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! 'Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?' 'Who has ever given to God, that God should repay them?'

For from him and through him and for him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.” (Rom 11:33–36, NIV)

The Guilty Ones

If you have tried, as much as you are capable, to teach holiness and self-control to your children, you are not accountable for their going astray. God does not convict anyone for teaching virtue and giving good example. The people who will be convicted are those who lead others to sin. Jesus said, “Things that cause sin will inevitably occur, but woe to the person through whom they occur. It would be better for him if a millstone were put around his neck and he be thrown into the sea than for him to cause one of these little ones to sin.” (Lk 17:1-2, NAB)

Pray with Strong Faith

When asked “What must we do if we are to carry out God’s work?” Jesus replied, “This is carrying out God’s work: you must believe in the one he has sent.” (Jn 6:28–29, NJB) A sure way you can perform the work of God through belief in his Son is to pray with expectant faith. St. James said in his epistle, “Faith without deeds is dead.” (See Jas 2:21–26, NIV.) This is partly what he meant: if our so-called faith is not accompanied by deeds that evidence trust in God, it is useless. Prayers said without confidence are merely empty words.

If you want your prayer to be answered, please pray as Jesus taught: “Therefore I tell you, all that you ask

for in prayer, believe that you will receive it and it shall be yours.” (Mk 11:24, NAB)

The prayer of faith is a singularly powerful weapon. With it you can reverse the tide of immorality and irreligion that has swept over the world.

Pray for all parents. Pray for your own peace of mind. Pray for your sons and daughters, and all God’s children. Pray especially that God will pardon their sins. Like Jesus, beg him from your heart, “Father, forgive them; they know not what they do.” (Lk 23:34, NAB)

Pray the “Our Father.” A very important petition in this superb prayer is for forgiveness. Jesus teaches us to ask for deliverance from temptation and evil.

Chastisement

Pray that, in order to secure their repentance, God will not have to reprimand your children. But do not be alarmed if he does reprove them. It is only for their good that God corrects his people. “Because the Lord disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in.” (Prov 3:12, NIV) For the Prodigal Son, chastisement came in the form of total financial bankruptcy, abject hunger, and hard labour. For the woman taken in adultery, it was public humiliation and the shameful penalty of stoning.

Pray that if admonition does come, it will accomplish its purpose with perfect effectiveness and yield the appropriate response from your children in the shortest time.

Hope

Never tire of praying for your children. Do not give up. If the Prodigal Son can return to his father, if the woman taken in adultery can meet Jesus and be rescued, so also can your sons and daughters.

Your children may be under the temporary influence of evil-doers, but be assured that victory will come because of the infinite love of God. “No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rom 8:37–39, NIV)

Always look forward to the day when, like the Prodigal Son’s father, you will be able to say with gratitude to God, “Then let us celebrate with a feast, because this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and has been found.” (Lk 15:23–24, NAB)

Give Thanks

Let us thank God daily for his love. If he had not sent Jesus to die for our children’s sins, we certainly would despair. But as it is we can place our hope in the redemptive merits of our Saviour.

Scripture says, “This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.” (1 Jn 4:10, NIV)

“When we were still helpless, at the appointed time, Christ died for the godless. You could hardly find anyone ready to die even for someone upright; though it is just possible that, for a really good person, someone might undertake to die. So it is proof of God’s own love for us, that Christ died for us while we were still sinners. How much more can we be sure, therefore, that, now that we have been justified by his death, we shall be saved through him from the retribution of God. For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, how much more can we be sure that, being now reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.” (Rom 5:6–10, NJB)

“What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all – how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died – more than that, who was raised to life – is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.” (Rom 8:31–34, NIV)

Jesus

“Soon afterward he journeyed to a city called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd accompanied him. As he drew near to the gate of the city, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. A large crowd from the city was

with her. When the Lord saw her, he was moved with pity for her and said to her, ‘Do not weep.’ He stepped forward and touched the coffin; at this the bearers halted, and he said, ‘Young man, I tell you, arise!’ The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother.” (Lk 7:11–15, NAB)

One of the most agonizing ordeal human beings can experience is to miss the person they love. For parents, to miss a child, their own flesh and blood with whom they spent so many beautiful and memorable years, is to go through an emptiness indescribably difficult to bear. For them it may feel as if everything has collapsed and has been shattered to pieces.

Jesus understood this. He brought back to the widow her one and only son.

Jesus is kind. He is understanding. He empathizes with his people. Pray humbly to him: “Jesus, I ask you to please have mercy and return my child to holiness and peace. In the interest of all parents, I ask this favour for their sons and daughters as well.”

Mother Mary

Turn also to Our Lady. As Jesus on the cross entrusted John, his beloved friend, to her with these words, “Woman, this is your son” (Jn 19:26, NJB), so can you also entrust your children to her by saying, “Mother, this is your son; Mother, this is your daughter. Please do whatever you can for them.”

You are stricken with grief, so was Our Lady. Your heart is broken, so was hers. Listen to Simeon’s prophecy at the Temple: “And a sword will pierce your

soul too.” (Lk 2:35, NJB) And Mary certainly knew what it was like to lose a child to the evils of man. She will spare no effort to intercede on your behalf.

In your journey with Our Lady may you and your children mature in all spirituality as Jesus did under her tutelage. “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.” (Lk 2:51-52, NJB)

Fear Not

And do not be afraid. God did not create his children for disaster, but for good. He did not create them for Hell, but for Heaven. He did not create them as presents for the devil, but as heirs to His own glorious Kingdom.

God’s defeat of the devil is absolute. Do not be frightened. “Resist the devil, and he will run away from you.” (Jas 4:7, NJB)

“Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Phil 4:4–7, NIV)

A Prayer from Scripture

“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 God’s 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 knowledge, you may be filled with the utter fullness of God.

“Glory be to him whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine; glory be to him from generation to generation in the Church and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. Amen.” (Eph 3:14–21, NJB)

CHAPTER THREE

HOPE

The virtue of hope is an expectation and a desire that what God has promised will indeed come true.

Take this example. Jesus said, “My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish. No one can take them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one can take them out of the Father’s hand.” (Jn 10:27–29, NAB) Parents who act on the God-given theological virtue of hope will take this promise of Jesus to heart, apply it to their own children, and derive from it genuine peace and consolation.

They will also increase in understanding of God and his creation as they read the following passage. “Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him. And the Pharisees and the scribes murmured, saying, ‘This man receives sinners and eats with them.’

“Then Jesus told them this parable: ‘Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’ I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents

than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.” (Lk 15:3–7, NIV)

Presumption

This is not to say that mothers and fathers may advise their children: “Go ahead and sin. It’s alright.” Those who offer such misguided instructions are guilty of the serious sins of presumption and irreverence towards God and his laws.

Hope is not based on any infraction of God’s decrees. Jesus said, “You must love the Lord your God...” (Mt 22:37, NJB) “If you love me you will keep my commandments.” (Jn 14:15, NJB) You *must* love God – by obeying his commands. Whether the children are willing to do so at this stage of their development is another matter; God has given them the gift of free will. But no one may counsel them to sin.

You are Not at Fault

It is sad, but some children are more resistant than others to sensible training. Now, if parents have done their duty, it is appropriate that they do not blame themselves for the children’s spiritual blindness.

The prophet Ezekiel put it very clearly: “The son shall not be charged with the guilt of his father, nor shall the father be charged with the guilt of his son.” (Ezek 18:20, NAB)

Stand firm on Jesus’ statement in the next story, and do not doubt him. “As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, ‘Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born

blind?’ ‘Neither this man nor his parents sinned,’ said Jesus, ‘but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him.’” (Jn 9:1–3, NIV)

God Will Teach Them

Jesus said, “No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me, and I will raise that person up on the last day. It is written in the prophets: They will all be taught by God.” (Jn 6:44–45, NJB)

Let the Lord teach them!

Now, we are not advocating that you abrogate your important role as earthly guardians; we are not telling you to stop training and disciplining your sons and daughters. We are simply reminding you to remember God’s part in their upbringing, and leave some things in his hands. Once in a while you may have to let go a little bit. This is not an easy task; you will feel regret and failure; you will miss your children; the sense of loss will be sharp. But you must trust in the ability of the Lord to educate his people.

When Will God Act?

In the second quotation near the beginning of this chapter, the tax-collectors and sinners who came to listen to Jesus were grown men and women. It is not unlikely that your children will also be adults by the time they finally hear and respond to God’s call. Your hope must include the acceptance of the probability that change may not necessarily happen right now but perhaps at a much later date.

The following are references in the Gospel that depict the turning points in the lives of five grown-ups. By reflecting on these texts it may improve your knowledge of God and how he reaches out to his lost sheep.

The first recalls how Jesus drew Zacchaeus back to the fold. All he said to the sinful tax-collector was, “Zacchae’us, make haste and come down; for I must stay at your house today.” Immediately the man came and made this commitment to redress the wrongs he had done. He promised, “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have defrauded any one of anything, I restore it fourfold.” The dramatic event brought forth Jesus’ description of a very important part of his mission, “For the Son of man came to seek out and to save the lost.” (Lk 19:5, 8, 10, RSV)

The second story is about the woman caught in adultery and sentenced to death by stoning. The narrative demonstrates Jesus’ readiness to both defend and correct his people. This was the occasion on which he said, “Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.” One after another the accusers left, and Jesus said to her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you? ... Neither do I condemn you; go, and do not sin again.” (Jn 8:7, 10, 11, RSV)

The third is found in Lk 7:36–38 (NIV). “When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, he went to the Pharisee’s house and reclined at the table. A woman in that town who lived a sinful life

learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them." Read the rest of the passage and you will witness how tenderly Jesus welcomed the return of the penitent. "Your sins are forgiven," he said. "Go in peace." (Lk 7:48, 50, NIV)

Then there was the encounter between Jesus and the Samaritan woman who had had five husbands and who was then living with a man to whom she was not married. By her transformation she became instrumental in bringing a large number of her neighbours to Jesus. "Many Samaritans of that town believed in him on the strength of the woman's words of testimony, 'He told me everything I have done.'" (Jn 4:39, NJB)

Finally we hear the beautiful account of the repentance of the good thief crucified beside Jesus. He admitted his sinfulness at the last hour. "Then he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.' He answered him, 'In truth I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.'" (Lk 23:39-43, NJB)

Will Jesus come to your children? Definitely! When? We do not know; but he surely will. And they will be given the opportunity to learn what he wants them to learn, change what he wants them to change, do what he wants them to do.

"Everyone whom the Father gives me will come to me; I will certainly not reject anyone who comes to

me, because I have come from heaven, not to do my own will, but to do the will of him who sent me. Now the will of him who sent me is that I should lose nothing of all that he has given to me.” (Jn 6:37–39, NJB)

The Good Shepherd

Jesus said, “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. He who is a hireling and not a shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hireling and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd; I know my own and my own know me, as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep, that are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will heed my voice.” (Jn 10:10–16, RSV)

Jesus also said, “And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” (Jn 12:32, NIV) Jesus has already been lifted up on Calvary. He was raised gloriously at the Resurrection. At his Ascension, he was taken high up into heaven. And so, as he promised, he will draw all to himself, including your sons and daughters.

Perhaps you can hold Jesus up to your children and make him even more visible by your steadfast faith in him, by your unwavering hope, and your inexhaustible love.

Pray

Let your hope be accompanied by persistent prayer. Listen to what Jesus has to say. “Then he told them a parable about the need to pray continually and never lose heart. ‘There was a judge in a certain town,’ he said, ‘who had neither fear of God nor respect for anyone. In the same town there was also a widow who kept on coming to him and saying, “I want justice from you against my enemy!” For a long time he refused, but at last he said to himself, “Even though I have neither fear of God nor respect for any human person, I must give this widow her just rights since she keeps pestering me, or she will come and slap me in the face.”’”

“And the Lord said, ‘You notice what the unjust judge has to say? Now, will not God see justice done to his elect if they keep calling to him day and night even though he still delays to help them? I promise you, he will see justice done to them, and done speedily.’” (Lk 18:1–8, NJB)

Jesus promised, “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.” (Mt 7:7–8, NAB)

Holy Mass

The most excellent and theologically correct prayer you can offer to God for your children is Holy Mass. In this celebration, the whole Church prays for them. It is true that in the Church there are some unholy

members; but there are also many holy ones. And God will listen to their voices.

Beyond that, the most important reality to keep in mind is Jesus' sacrifice on Calvary, for that is what is being re-enacted at the altar. This is precisely why the prayer is so efficacious.

From the beginning of the Mass, in the penitential rite, we hear these wonderful petitions to Jesus.

“You were sent to heal the contrite of heart: Lord have mercy.”

“You came to call sinners: Christ, have mercy.”

“You are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us: Lord, have mercy.”

“May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.”

In the Gloria, together we implore Jesus to hear our prayer, “Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us.”

Then, addressing God in one of the Prefaces, the priest articulates: “Father, all-powerful and ever-living God, we do well always and everywhere to give you thanks. For in goodness you created man and, when he was justly condemned, in mercy you redeemed him, through Christ our Lord.”

And in the first Eucharistic prayer, the celebrant pleads on our behalf, “Therefore, Lord, we pray: graciously accept this oblation of our service, that of your whole family; order our days in your peace, and

command that we be delivered from eternal damnation and counted among the flock of those you have chosen. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.”

At the Consecration, Jesus reminds us of his sacred pledges, “Take this, all of you, and eat of it, for this is my Body, which will be given up for you...

“Take this, all of you, and drink from it, for this is the chalice of my Blood, the Blood of the new and eternal covenant, which will be poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.”

Before the great Amen, the priest prays, “To us, also, your servants, who, though sinners, hope in your abundant mercies, graciously grant some share and fellowship with your holy Apostles and Martyrs... and all your Saints; admit us, we beseech you, into their company, not weighing our merits, but granting us your pardon, through Christ our Lord.”

In the “Our Father” you already know the appeals for pardon and protection from the evil one. The prayer after this contains additional requests. “Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your Apostles: Peace I leave you, my peace I give you, look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church, and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your will.”

The Mass ends with this consoling farewell. “The Lord be with you... May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit... Go in peace.”

Hope in Your Saviour

Go to Mass often, and allow the prayers of the Church to help your children. Let the Holy Mass readings direct you.

At Holy Communion, remember your children as you pray, “Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.” Read the story after which this invocation is patterned (Lk 7:1–10); you will see that the petition is not for the centurion himself, but for his beloved servant. Let this therefore be a prayer for your beloved children too. Let it be a prayer of hope, a prayer of expectation and desire that Jesus will surely keep his promise: “I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish. No one can take them out of my hand.” (Jn 10:28, NAB)

“Lord, only say the word and my children shall be healed.” At the appointed time Jesus will speak his word. Your sons and daughters will be healed. They will return to their senses. They will come back to the Father. They will be safe and sound in Heaven – with you, in tearful surprise and grateful joy.

Pray, believe, and hope in the all-loving and merciful God of miracles.

CHAPTER FOUR

FAITH

Past Failings

We may not have been the best of parents; we may not have done all that was required to bring up our children properly; through our omissions, mistakes, weaknesses, ignorance and sins, we were unable to guide them in the most perfect way. Those days have gone by, and we cannot change them anymore. There is little else we can do now except to turn to God in faith. Dear parents, this is a vitally important step to take!

For faith can set us in right relationship with God. Listen to St. Paul. “What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, discovered in this matter? If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about – but not before God. What does Scripture say? ‘Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.’ Now to the one who works, wages are not credited as a gift but as an obligation. However, to the one who does not work but trusts God who justifies the ungodly, their faith is credited as righteousness... ... The words ‘it was credited to him’ were written not for him alone, but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness.” (Rom 4:1–5, 23–24, NIV)

God's Love and Grace

Put your faith in God by believing this about him: “The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in mercy. He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger for ever. He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities... For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust.” (Ps 103:8–10, 14, RSV)

When we believe in an understanding God, no matter how weak we have been, we can apply this saying of St. Paul to ourselves: “But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.’... For when I am weak, then I am strong.” (2 Cor 12:9, 10, NAB)

Bless the Lord

“I will bless the Lord at all times.” (Ps 34:1, RSV)

To bless God is to speak well of him, to think good thoughts about him, to interpret his words and deeds in the best light, to believe in his promises, to trust in his willingness and power to save.

A parent who blesses God says humbly, “Lord, I admit my negligence and past failures. I have fallen short in my duties towards the children. I beg your forgiveness. I know that you love me and my family. I know that you love us very dearly. I know that you are with us and take care of us at all times. I believe firmly that with you by our side everything will turn out well. You look upon us in kindness; you receive our prayers with compassion; you smile on us with a fatherly

countenance of appreciation and support for every little good that we attempt to perform.”

This parent might also say, “Lord, I am troubled and do not know what to do. I need your help. Whatever in me that requires correction please let me know your will so that, with your assistance, I may make the necessary changes in the way I live. Lord, you are the God of peace, and I ask you to drive out from me the devil and all evil spirits who foment darkness and depression.”

On the other hand, those who think poorly of God might speak to him like this, “Why me? Why did you give me such children? With them around there is never any peace. There can never be lasting joy. I always have this ominous foreboding that at any moment I will receive disastrous news about one of them. This dread won’t ever go away. Sometimes I wish I were dead.”

Condemned

No faith in Jesus? “Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.” (Jn 3:18, NIV) People who do not act on their gift of faith condemn themselves to melancholy, worry, anger and hatred.

When we disbelieve the Bible’s description of God, we judge him according to our own feelings; we raise ourselves to a point where we think we know God better than the inspired writers of Holy Scripture. At the same time, we denigrate God in our sight by

lowering him to our own level. In so doing we chain ourselves to superficiality and confusion that give rise to despair and sickness in mind, body, and soul.

Fear of the Lord

In the Gospel according to Luke, it is recorded that Mary said in the *Magnificat*: “And his mercy is on those who fear him from generation to generation.” (Lk 1:50, RSV) Those who fear God have, among other things, a wholesome reverence for him, and a very strong faith in him. They acknowledge and respect his omniscience, power, and majesty. They are confident that he will triumph over all evil. They are inspired by an intense hope and a personal devotion to the goodness of God.

Psalm 128 tells us that such people will enjoy God’s special favour. “How blessed are all who fear Yahweh, who walk in his ways! Your own labours will yield you a living; happy and prosperous will you be. Your wife a fruitful vine in the inner places of your house. Your children round your table like shoots of an olive tree. Such are the blessings that fall on those who fear Yahweh.” (Ps 128:1–4, NJB)

Certainly, the fear of God includes walking in his ways. Those who flaunt his commandments have undeniable reason to fear his wrath. “For if we sin deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful prospect of judgment, and a fury of fire which will consume the adversaries.” (Heb 10:26–27, RSV) Jesus himself cautions: “And do not fear those who kill

the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.” (Mt 10: 28, RSV)

Whether you are man or woman, your personal adherence to God’s laws is of critical importance. Keep walking in his ways and you will not fail to reap rewards for your spouse and the whole family now and far into the future.

“But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon those who fear him, and his righteousness to children’s children, to those who keep his covenant and remember to do his commandments.” (Ps 103:17–18, RSV)

Childlikeness

Strive to relate to God with simplicity. Be as the psalmist says, “I hold myself in quiet and silence, like a little child in its mother’s arms, like a little child, so I keep myself.” (Ps 131:2, NJB)

For the Lord commands, “Be still, and know that I am God.” (Ps 46:10, RSV)

And Jesus himself tells us, “In truth I tell you, unless you change and become like little children you will never enter the kingdom of Heaven.” (Mt 18:3, NJB)

Prayer

Simplicity and childlikeness should be seen in the way you pray. Jesus said, “And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like

them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. This, then, is how you should pray: ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done.’” (Mt 6:7–10, NIV)

Peace

Jesus said, “Peace I bequeath to you, my own peace I give you, a peace which the world cannot give, this is my gift to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid.” (Jn 14:27, NJB) Jesus’ own peace is a peace that kept him steady throughout his Passion and Crucifixion. It is a peace unshaken in the face of heart-wrenching pain and sorrow; it remains even on the road to seeming defeat; it holds everything together as life appears to be falling apart. This is the peace he gives you as you grapple with the events that affect your children and family.

This peace will help you to stop worrying about how difficult or how nigh impossible it would be for your dreams to come true. It will help you to refrain from wishing inordinately for things to happen according to your own time-table and in the way you suggest. It will help you to discover that joy in your heart does not depend on your children’s instantaneous conversion.

Be open to peace. Seek it. Yearn for it. Accept it.

Total Surrender

Jesus said, “And look, I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.” (Mt 28:20, NJB) Jesus is telling you emphatically to believe that he is near to you, that he

takes great interest in your affairs, that he is unceasingly there for you.

Make the leap of faith, and abandon yourself to him. With John the Baptist, tell him, “Jesus, you must increase; I must decrease.” (See Jn 3:30.)

With the psalmist, pray with these words:

“I will glory in the Lord; let the afflicted hear and rejoice.

“I sought the Lord, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears.

“Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame.

“Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.

“The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

“The Lord will rescue his servants; no one who takes refuge in him will be condemned.” (Ps 34:2, 4, 5, 8, 18, 22, NIV)

“In you, Lord, I have taken refuge; let me never be put to shame; deliver me in your righteousness.

“Into your hands I commit my spirit; deliver me, Lord, my faithful God.” (Ps 31:1, 5, NIV)

CHAPTER FIVE

LOVE

Of the three theological virtues, St. Paul puts love at the very top. “There are three things that last for ever: faith, hope and love; and the greatest of the three is love.” (I Cor 13:13, NIV)

Imitate God’s Love

Love your children even though it has become difficult to do so. Love them as God the Father loves. When he saw his people’s sinfulness, he did not reject them; instead, he persisted by giving them what was most precious in his heart – “his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” (Jn 3:16, NIV)

Love them as God the Son loves. Jesus said, “You must love one another just as I have loved you.” (Jn 13:34, NJB) At the Last Supper, Jesus knew and predicted that his followers would desert him. “Listen; the time will come – indeed it has come already – when you are going to be scattered, each going his own way and leaving me alone.” (Jn 16:32, NJB) Yet he gave himself whole-heartedly to them. You must do no less for your children.

At the same Supper, Jesus showed his humility and his dedication by washing his disciples’ feet; you must exhibit the same humility and service to your children.

“Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.” (Jn 13:1, RSV) You have loved your sons and daughters ever since they were little babies; now you must continue in that love.

On Good Friday, Jesus was beaten and insulted. He was made to wear a crown of thorns – a symbol of grave dishonour. In bearing the humiliation and suffering inflicted on you by your children’s misconduct, you are giving them a love like that of the Lord your God.

Your Children’s Friends

Parents are naturally suspicious of the company their children keep. They are afraid and distrustful. Their fears are understandable in that friends can be sources of temptation to sin.

One thing you must do is pray fervently. Pray that if the friendships are not from the Lord they will be terminated; and if they are from the Lord, that his guidance will be heeded. Pray for the friends too – you may be the only one who offers prayers for them. Keep them and their families in your permanent list of prayer intentions. Instead of being annoyed, thank God the Father for choosing you as one of his instruments for leading them to him.

Jesus says, “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the

unjust... You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” (Mt 5:43–45, 48, RSV)

You may have considered your children’s friends as enemies and the reason for unrest in your otherwise tranquil existence. But now, try unlocking your heart towards them. In this way you may be holding open the door for them to a short-cut on their path to salvation.

“The tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to listen to him.” (Lk 15:1, NAB) Why did Jesus associate with sinners? Why was he so approachable? The answer is seen in this reading: “The Pharisees and their scribes complained to his disciples and said, ‘Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?’ Jesus said to them in reply, ‘It is not those that are well who need the doctor, but the sick. I have come to call not the upright but sinners to repentance.’” (Lk 5:30–31, NJB)

By caring and praying for your children and their friends you may be able to pass on to them Jesus’ call for repentance. Hatred and alienation will not convert, but hospitality and warmth may. It is worth a try.

Don’t forget that your children’s sins are against God and his commandments, not against you. Let God resolve the matter in his own special way. “Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God; for it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.’ ... Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.” (Rom 12:19, 21, RSV)

Forgiveness

“Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, and patience, forbearing one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.” (Col 3:12–13, RSV)

Consider how God loves and forgives you, and know that that is how God loves and forgives your children and their friends. Know that that is how you must love and forgive them too.

Some Characteristics of Love

Use the scripture passage below, phrase by phrase, to examine how you can refine your love for the children.

“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.” (I Cor 13:4–7, NJB)

Sacrifice

Sin is wrong, and we must aim to prevent it in ourselves and in our family. But if we are unable to convince the children, we can walk alongside Jesus and participate in his mission of reparation for sins by personal sacrifices such as fasting or giving up something that we treasure.

In the book of Job, the story goes that this upright man rose early after his children's parties and presented burnt-offerings to the Lord on behalf of each one of them. "For Job said, 'It may be that my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.' This Job did habitually." (Job 1:5, NAB)

The Power of Love

Throughout the years, your personal blunders and faults may have caused inadequacies in the upbringing of your children. But you can overcome the defective fallouts even now by giving them unfailing love. The first book of Peter tells us, "Above all hold unfailing love for one another, since love covers a multitude of sins." (1 Pet 4:8, RSV) It is not too late.

If you love your children, you love God; and by loving God, you can claim what is written in this text: "We are well aware that God works with those who love him, those who have been called in accordance with his purpose, and turns everything to their good." (Rom 8:28, NJB)

And when you love your children, fear will go away too. "There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear." (1 Jn 4:18, NIV)

Final Blessing

This is an unselfish prayer: "God, the children are facing the world on their own now; please guide them and look after everything that concerns them – their eternal destiny, their morals, their temporal aspirations, studies, endeavours, decisions, careers, relationships,

vocation. Please answer their prayers so that they may more easily believe in you and increasingly turn to you for friendship. Be with them at every moment. Bless them, Lord; bless all their friends and acquaintances. Let their lives give you abundant glory, honour, and praise. Thank you, Lord, thank you.”

CHAPTER SIX

PEACE

No doubt, this is a time of trials and tribulations for many fathers and mothers. Some of our children have little love or respect for us; they are often rude and disobedient. Some ignore God; they do not go to church. Others are given to sin.

Fellow parents, the following considerations may help to bring a measure of peace to our families.

God

The problems spoken of above originate partly from the devil who attacks God's people. But the Lord protects our sons and daughters. His omnipotence is everlasting and infinitely stronger than any evil Satan can cause. We have to be vigilant and never lose hope. God knows our troubles; he keeps watch over each and every one of us. Scripture tells us to do this:

“Bow down, then, before the power of God now, so that he may raise you up in due time; unload all your burden on to him, since he is concerned about you. Keep sober and alert, because your enemy the devil is on the prowl like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Stand up to him, strong in faith and in the knowledge that it is the same kind of suffering that the community of your brothers throughout the world is undergoing. You will have to suffer only for a little while: the God of all grace who called you to eternal

glory in Christ will restore you, he will confirm, strengthen and support you. His power lasts for ever and ever. Amen.” (1 Pet 5:6–11, NJB)

Jesus

We should also be reassured and encouraged by the teaching of Jesus on God’s concern for his wayward children. “See that you do not despise one of these little ones; for I tell you that in heaven their angels always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven. What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go in search of the one that went astray? And if he finds it, truly, I tell you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. So it is not the will of my Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.” (Mt 18:10–14, RSV)

Ourselves

“Parents, do not irritate your children or they will lose heart.” (Col 3:21, NJB)

To better our relationship with the children we ought to improve our own behaviour. From time to time we ought to examine how we treat our sons and daughters. For example, do our conversations with them consist only of criticisms, castigations, and advice? Do we often run after them to launch verbal brawls? When they return from an outing do we inevitably set about satisfying our curiosity on what they have been doing with interrogations akin to those

coming from a police detective? Do we generally speak less warmly to them than we speak to our pets? Do we listen to what they have to say with genuine interest? When they ask for a favour, is our first unthinking reaction invariably an ugly “No!”?

We have to realize that peace cannot come to our households unless we ourselves cease starting wars. Peace cannot come if we always insist on having the last word. Peace cannot come if we do not sometimes remain discreetly silent in the face of impertinence and ingratitude.

St. Paul says, “When we are cursed, we answer with a blessing; when we are hounded, we endure it passively; when we are insulted, we give a courteous answer.” (I Cor 4:12–13, NJB)

The writer of Proverbs in the Bible makes this wise observation, “A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.” (Prov 15:1, RSV)

And the first book of Peter tells us, “Finally, all of you, be of one mind, sympathetic, loving toward one another, compassionate, humble. Do not return evil for evil, or insult for insult; but, on the contrary, a blessing, because to this you were called, that you might inherit a blessing. For:

‘Whoever would love life
and see good days
must keep the tongue from evil
and the lips from speaking deceit,
must turn from evil and do good,
seek peace and follow after it.’”

(1 Pet 3:8–11, NAB)

Consecration Prayer

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus,

Immaculate Heart of Mary:

**I consecrate to you
myself and every member of my family.**

**I consecrate to you
all our relatives and friends.**

**I consecrate to you
all parents and children of every age.**

Help us to be holy.

Grant us peace!

CHAPTER SEVEN

PRAY THE ROSARY

This chapter is taken from *The Rosary – A Worried Parent Prays* by Andrew Jerome Yeung.

Opening Prayer

O my God, I beg you to heed this humble prayer offered for the eternal welfare of my family. Please, Father, bring my children to you in holiness and peace. I ask this in the name of Jesus, in union with the Holy Spirit, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and with all your angels and saints. Amen.

(A) The Joyful Mysteries

1. The first Joyful Mystery

The Annunciation

The Angel Gabriel came to Joseph and made this annunciation concerning his wife Mary and son: “She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.” (Mt 1: 21, NAB)

Loving Father, you created my children, and gave them the gift of freedom; but you have not abandoned them on their own to deal with their weaknesses and the possibility of sin. Thank you for the gift of your

Son, Jesus – a name so chosen, as the angel explained, “because he will save his people from their sins.” Thank you for your plan of Redemption.

2. The second Joyful Mystery

The Visitation

When Mary visited her cousin Elizabeth and Zechariah in the hill country, she articulated this encouraging truth about God: “The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is from age to age to those who fear him.” (Lk 1:49–50, NAB)

Loving God, your mercy does not stop with me; it extends to every generation, to my children, and to their descendants. Thank you for all the great things you have done for me and will also do for them as the years go by. There is no limit to your love for the children. There is no boundary to your goodness towards them.

3. The third Joyful Mystery

The Birth of Jesus

On the night Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the angel appeared to the shepherds in the neighbouring fields saying, “Do not be afraid. Look, I bring you news of great joy, a joy to be shared by the whole people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.” (Lk 2:10–11, NJB)

Dear Jesus, your good news of salvation is for all the people – the just and the unjust, those who go to

church and those who do not, the ones who know they need you and the ones who ignore your existence.

From my youth you have corrected me in gradual stages, how can I suppose you will not do the same for my sons and daughters and all our descendants! You are my Saviour; you are theirs too. Lord, help me not to be afraid but to trust you in unremitting joy.

4. The fourth Joyful Mystery

The Presentation

Joseph and Mary, when you presented baby Jesus at the temple, you presented and consecrated to God the entire Body of Christ. That includes my sons and daughters – brothers and sisters of your first-born Son. Therefore I shall not fear because all my children and offspring are under God’s constant protection and care.

At the time of the presentation, Simeon came into the temple. Seeing Jesus, he blessed God, saying, “Lord, now let your servant depart in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation.” (Lk 2:29–30, RSV) Lord, just as Simeon commended himself to you in peaceful resignation, let me rest in you now as I lay at your feet all my concerns for my children. In times of difficulties, or when tempted to despair, may I always call on you: Lord, rescue us, save us.

5. The fifth Joyful Mystery

The Finding of Jesus in the Temple

On the third day after young Jesus remained in Jerusalem without his parents’ knowledge, they found

him in the temple. His mother complained, “My child, why have you done this to us? See how worried your father and I have been, looking for you.” (Lk 2:48, NJB)

St. Joseph and Mother Mary, if you searched so anxiously for Jesus, the perfect Son, surely you are all the more earnestly going after those who have really gone astray. Thank you for your participation in pursuing my children and leading them back to safety.

Jesus, at age twelve, you personally witnessed the suffering which your father and mother went through because they thought they had lost you. Since then, how lovingly have you sacrificed yourself for the sake of every parent to save their children, every son and daughter, every soul, every human being, sparing no effort whatsoever – not even your own earthly life.

You have since assured us regarding your Father’s will: “And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up at the last day.” (Jn 6:39, RSV)

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I thank you for myself too. If you had not looked for me during my life, where would I be now!

(B) The Luminous Mysteries

1. The first Luminous Mystery

The Baptism of Jesus

The day after John baptized Jesus he saw Jesus again coming towards him at the River Jordan. He

testified in everyone's hearing: "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (Jn 1:29, NIV)

Jesus, Lamb of God, Beloved Son of the Father, thank you for coming to take away the sin of the world, including my sins and my children's.

2. The second Luminous Mystery

The Miracle at Cana

Jesus, moved by your mother's loving concern when she confided to you "They have no more wine," you changed six large jars of water into wine. The jars were filled to the brim, and the wine was so good that the steward was prompted to praise his host by remarking, "...you have saved the best till now." (Jn 2:3, 10, NIV)

Jesus, you manifested such great kindness to your mother and her friends in so small a matter; I firmly believe you will perform much more significant miracles before the end of time – changing her children into saints, filling them to the brim with holiness.

"What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him." (Jn 2:11, NIV) Lord, like the disciples, I believe in you. I believe you will work millions upon millions of miracles; and they can happen at any moment, under myriads of different circumstances, and for my children's good.

Of course, Jesus, you don't have to do everything all at once. In line with your holy will, you are free to save the best till last.

3. The third Luminous Mystery

The Announcement of the Kingdom and the Call to Repentance

“After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. ‘The time has come,’ he said. ‘The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!’” (Mk 1:14–15, NIV)

Jesus, the lingering sin I must repent of, once and for all, is my unbelief in your love. The time has come that I must convert and believe with my whole heart in your immeasurable love for me! Never must I ever doubt that you care for me and for my children. You are always ready to heal our infirmities, both spiritual and temporal. Your invitation to conversion is accompanied by a plenitude of graces. The evangelist gave us this confirmation in the Gospel: “And from his fullness have we all received, grace upon grace.” (Jn 1:16, RSV)

Over and over again you demonstrated in the gospel your love for the people. “He went around all of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and curing every disease and illness among the people.” (Mt 4:23, NAB)

4. The fourth Luminous Mystery

The Transfiguration

“And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his garments became white as light... and a voice from the cloud said, ‘This is my

beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.’ When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces, and were filled with awe. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, ‘Rise, and have no fear.’” (Mt 17: 2–7, RSV)

Jesus, majestic and victorious Lord, your Father is pleased with all that you do for the people. He orders us to listen to you. Lord, I will listen, and obey; teach me; help me to know you so that I may rise and live no more in daily fear for my children.

5. The fifth Luminous Mystery

The Institution of the Holy Eucharist

“Then he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, ‘This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.’” (Lk 22:19, NJB)

“Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he handed it to them saying, ‘Drink from this, all of you, for this is my blood, the blood of the covenant, poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.’” (Mt 26:27–28, NJB)

Thank you, Jesus, that you gave us your body and blood for the forgiveness of our sins. Lord, help me to always remember your goodness. At Mass and Holy Communion I will pray: “Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed. Only say the word, and at the time of your choice my errant children will be

brought back to health in mind and body, in soul and in spirit.”

(C) The Sorrowful Mysteries

1. The first Sorrowful Mystery

The Agony in the Garden

Jesus at Gethsemane, acutely aware of the brutality awaiting him at the crucifixion, began to feel severe anguish, distress, and grief. “He was in such agony and he prayed so fervently that his sweat became like drops of blood falling on the ground.” (Lk 22:44, NAB)

And going a bit further he fell on his face and begged, “Abba, Father! ... For you everything is possible. Take this cup away from me. But let it be as you, not I, would have it.” (Mk 14:36, NJB)

Jesus, I suspect one of the things you dreaded so horrendously about the impending crucifixion may have been the gruesome prospect of the pointed nail being pounded and pummeled into your hand. Every time I visualize it happening to me I recoil in utter terror. Thank you, dear Friend, for your determination to make reparation for the sins we committed, for deciding in our favour, knowing thereby none in my family would perish.

2. The second Sorrowful Mystery

The Scouring at the Pillar

“While he was still speaking, a crowd approached and in front was one of the Twelve, a man named

Judas. He went up to Jesus to kiss him. Jesus said to him, ‘Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?’” (Lk 22:47–48, NAB)

“When it was morning, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took council against Jesus to put him to death. They bound him, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate, the governor.” (Mt 27:1–2, NAB) “Pilate then took Jesus and had him scourged.” (Jn 19:1, NAB)

Lord, for the sake of healing my children you surrendered yourself to vicious beating demanded by spiteful antagonists. Isaiah prophesied this about you: “But he was pierced for our sins, crushed for our iniquity. He bore the punishment that makes us whole, by his wounds we were healed.” (Is 53:5, NAB)

The prophecy was affirmed in 1 Pet 2:24 (NAB): “By his wounds you have been healed.”

3. The third Sorrowful Mystery

The Crowning with Thorns

“Then the governor’s soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole company of soldiers around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand. Then they knelt in front of him and mocked him. ‘Hail, king of the Jews!’ they said. They spat on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again.” (Mt 27:28–30, NIV)

God of all creation, for the conversion of my children you accepted insults and insolence in silence. I do not fully comprehend the dynamics of this course of action, but if it promotes sanctity in my family, I will follow your example in my own home.

4. The fourth Sorrowful Mystery

The Carrying of the Cross

“As they were leading him away they seized on a man, Simon from Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and made him shoulder the cross and carry it behind Jesus.” (Lk 23:26, NJB)

Lord, like Simon, I will take up the cross after you. You gave so much of yourself to the children; I will also do my part for them. No matter what troubling situation they may be in, however uncomfortable I may feel from emotional strain, heartaches, disruptions and inconvenience, whatever needs to be spent – time, energy, money – I will be there for them, in quiet support, in prayerful supplication, in affectionate tenderness.

Scripture tells us: “Above all, let your love for one another be intense, because love covers a multitude of sins.” (I Pet 4:8, NAB)

“Love covers all offenses.” (Prov 10:12, NAB)

5. The fifth Sorrowful Mystery

The Crucifixion and Death of Jesus

On the cross Jesus implored his Father to forgive his executioners: “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.” (Lk 23:34, NAB)

One of the criminals crucified beside Jesus said to him, “‘Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.’ He replied to him, ‘Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.’” (Lk 23:42–43, NAB)

Lord, thank you for forgiveness. Thank you for mercy. Thank you for the gift of Paradise. Truly the apostle Paul was right in stating, “But where sin increased, grace increased all the more.” (Rom 5:20, NIV)

And, just in case my children have not asked, I now do so on their behalf: “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do. Jesus, remember them when you come into your kingdom. Into your hands I commit their spirits.”

(D) The Glorious Mysteries

1. The first Glorious Mystery

The Resurrection

On Easter morning, Mary Magdalen, Peter and John went to inspect Jesus’ tomb. It was empty. That same evening behind locked doors, the dejected disciples were huddled together in the deep darkness of misery and skepticism. Was nothing good happening that morning or that evening?

Nothing? Nothing at all? Yes, or no?

You be the judge!

Outside the tomb, Jesus had shown himself to Mary and called her affectionately by name. At the upper

room he came among the downcast disciples and announced: “Peace be with you.” They all rejoiced at seeing him.

Surely those two happy outcomes were not nothing!!!

And eight days after his resurrection, Jesus appeared to Thomas and pointed out to him, “You believe because you can see me. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe.” (Jn 20:29, NJB)

Jesus, my Lord and my God, at this moment I detect only minor signs of spiritual improvement in my children; but simply because I do not see much doesn’t mean that nothing more is actually happening in them.

Lord, help me to believe absolutely in the loving plan, and the power of the suffering, death and resurrection of the Son of God to bring about the salvation of my children. Let not doubt set in, but faith. Let not fear rule my heart, but rejoicing. Let not disappointment take over, but confidence in your promises.

2. The second Glorious Mystery

The Ascension

“And so the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven; there at the right hand of God he took his place.” (Mk 16:19, NJB)

St. Paul tells us: “It is Christ Jesus who died, rather, was raised, who also is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us.” (Rom 8:34, NAB) In the Father’s presence, Lord Jesus, you plead constantly for

my children. For you love them; you love them much more than I do, far deeper than I can imagine.

St. Paul continues: “For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rom 8:38–39, NAB)

3. The third Glorious Mystery

The Descent of the Holy Spirit

On the day of Pentecost, the apostle Peter reminded the multitude of God’s promise to send the Holy Spirit to his people. “And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; yes, and on my menservants and my maidservants in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.” (Acts 2:17–18, RSV)

St. Peter pressed on: “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children and to all that are far off, every one whom the Lord our God calls to him.” (Acts 2:38–39, RSV)

Holy Spirit, thank you for coming to my children. Thank you for calling them. I know you will instruct them thoroughly because Jesus said, “The Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you

everything.” (Jn 14:26, NJB) Spirit of Wisdom, under your inspiration, and at an hour known only to you, the wayward children will respond; they will come to their senses, they will abandon sinful habits, they will get up and come to the Father.

4. The fourth Glorious Mystery

The Assumption of Mother Mary into Heaven

“The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin is a singular participation in her Son’s Resurrection and an anticipation of the resurrection of other Christians:

“In giving birth you kept your virginity; in your Dormition you did not leave the world, O Mother of God, but were joined to the source of Life. You conceived the living God and, by your prayers, will deliver our souls from death.” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*: #966)

O Blessed Virgin Mary, full of grace, thank you that in your celestial glory you never stop looking after my children. Thank you for keeping them in your prayers. Holy Mother, profoundly grateful to God, unselfish and generous, I believe you will not rest until you have shared with every single one of your sons and daughters all the graces which you received from the Lord – so ardently does your motherly heart desire their eternal happiness in heaven.

5. The fifth Glorious Mystery

The Coronation of Mary as Queen of Heaven and Earth

“Finally the Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all stain of original sin, when the course of her earthly life was finished, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as Queen over all things, so that she might be the more fully conformed to her Son, the Lord of lords and conqueror of sin and death.” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*: #966)

Heavenly Queen, we welcome your reign over us. As Jesus advanced in wisdom and in favour before God while under your authority at Nazareth, I ask of you to also guide my children so that they will grow to be like your first-born Son, their elder brother and exemplar. May they be filled with the Holy Spirit and come to the kingdom of the Father, their Creator and benevolent King, there to enjoy fullness of life in glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Closing Prayer

Father, Jesus, Holy Spirit, thank you for taking care of my children and all your people. Mother Mary, and the entire company of angels and saints, thank you for your loving co-operation in the divine plan of Redemption.

Thank you, God, for blessing me personally. Please continue to increase in me your gifts of faith, hope, and love. Continue to increase in me your gifts of understanding and peace.

I will include other families in my intentions each time I pray the most holy Rosary.

CHAPTER EIGHT

A MESSAGE TO PARENTS

In today's world, bringing up adolescents can be a harrowing experience for parents. There are so many evils to beware of: alcoholism, pornography, immorality, drugs, gun violence... At the same time, temptations to sin come from multiple directions: television, magazines, friends, movies, social media...

To help their children, parents need to teach and guide them, especially by their own non-hypocritical examples. They must love them, spend time with them, and pray with them. They should correct and discipline them, but also allow their children some privacy and opportunities for self-expression and maturation, remembering that their offspring do not necessarily become instantaneously what parents hope and plan.

In this chapter three important considerations are emphasized: parents must pray for their children, they must have faith in God, they must not live in fear.

1. PRAY FOR YOUR CHILDREN

A mother's prayer

The prayer of a parent is very powerful. The passage below illustrates how a persistent mother hung

on to Jesus and moved him to perform a miracle for her daughter.

Jesus left that place and withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And suddenly out came a Canaanite woman from that district and started shouting, “Lord, Son of David, take pity on me. My daughter is tormented by a devil.” But he said not a word in answer to her. And his disciples went and pleaded with him, saying, “Give her what she wants, because she keeps shouting after us.” He said in reply, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the House of Israel.” But the woman had come up and was bowing low before him. “Lord,” she said, “help me.” He replied, “It is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to little dogs.” She retorted, “Ah yes, Lord; but even little dogs eat the scraps that fall from their master’s table.” Then Jesus answered her, “Woman, you have great faith. Let your desire be granted.” And from that moment her daughter was well again. (Mt 15:21–28, NJB)

A father’s prayer

The father in the next passage had asked the disciples to help. But when they could not, he persevered by going to Jesus.

As they were rejoining the crowd a man came up to him and went down on his knees before him. “Lord,” he said, “take pity on my son: he is demented and in a wretched state; he is always

falling into fire and into water. I took him to your disciples and they were unable to cure him.” In reply, Jesus said, “Faithless and perverse generation! How much longer must I be with you? How much longer must I put up with you? Bring him here to me.” And when Jesus rebuked it the devil came out of the boy, who was cured from that moment. (Mt 17:14–18, NJB)

Pray

What troubles your children? Whatever it is, pray for them. What troubles you concerning your children? Examine yourself truthfully, and pray for yourself.

If there is anything you can do, do it with wisdom and affection, and pray. If there is nothing you or anyone else can do, pray.

In Mark’s version of the above healing story, when asked by the disciples why they themselves could not cast out the demon from the boy, Jesus answered: “This is the kind that can be driven out only *by prayer*.” (Mk 9:29, NJB)

2. HAVE FAITH

When you pray, do so with faith. Jesus said to the Canaanite mother: “Woman, you have great *faith*! Let your desire be granted.” (Mt 15:28, NJB)

He said to the demented boy’s father in the Gospel according to Mark: “Everything is possible for one who has *faith*.” (Mk 9:23, NJB)

To the disciples who could not heal the demented boy, he gave the reason: “Because you have so little faith. In truth I tell you, if your *faith* is the size of a mustard seed you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; nothing will be impossible for you.” (Mt 17:20, NJB)

By believing in Jesus, the father in the next story obtained what he asked for.

And at Capernaum there was an official whose son was ill. When he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went and begged him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. Jesus therefore said to him, “Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe.” The official said to him, “Sir, come down before my child dies.” Jesus said to him, “Go; your son will live.” The man *believed the word that Jesus spoke to him* and went his way. As he was going down, his servants met him and told him that his son was living. So he asked them the hour when he began to mend, and they said to him, “Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.” The father knew that was the hour when Jesus had said to him, “Your son will live”; and he himself believed, and all his household. (Jn 4:46–53, RSV)

The dying

The concern you have for your sons and daughters may not be physical. Read the above texts again as

though they are about your own children, but replace the mentioned illness by the maladies threatening the young ones in your home.

Read the next story as if it is about your child whom you presume to be on the road to eternal damnation.

And suddenly there came a man named Jairus, who was president of the synagogue. He fell at Jesus' feet and pleaded with him to come to his house, because he had an only daughter about twelve years old, who was dying...

While he was still speaking, someone arrived from the house of the president of the synagogue to say, "Your daughter has died. Do not trouble the Master any further." But Jesus heard this, and he spoke to the man, "Do not be afraid, only *have faith* and she will be saved..." They were all crying and mourning for her, but Jesus said, "Stop crying; she is not dead, but asleep." But they ridiculed him, knowing she was dead. But taking her by the hand himself he spoke to her, "Child, get up." And her spirit returned and she got up at that very moment. Then he told them to give her something to eat.

(Lk 8:41–42, 49–50, 52–55, NJB)

No matter how hopeless the situation appears, entrust your children to Jesus. Entrust yourself to him. Learn from his example. He took the child by the hand with kindness; he spoke with her; he asked her parents to give her something to eat, to nourish her, to care for

her, to be attentive and loving towards her, to cherish her.

Trust Jesus' mission

He said:

“All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those he has given me, but raise them up at the last day.”
(Jn 6:37–39, NIV)

“The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice; I know them and they follow me. I give them eternal life; they will never be lost and no one will ever steal them from my hand. The Father, for what he has given me, is greater than anyone, and no one can steal anything from the Father's hand.”
(Jn 10:27–29, NJB)

“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. Tell me. Suppose a man has a hundred sheep and one of them strays; will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hillside and go in search of the stray? In truth I tell you, if he finds it, it gives him more joy than do the ninety-nine that did not stray at all. Similarly, it is never the will of your Father

in heaven that one of these little ones should be lost.” (Mt 18:10–14, NJB)

3. BE NOT AFRAID

In the account of Jairus’ daughter, Jesus said to the father of the little girl: “*Do not be afraid*, only have faith and she will be saved... She is not dead, but asleep.” (Lk 8:50, 52, NJB)

In another passage of the gospel, he assures everyone:

“Can you not buy five sparrows for two pennies? And yet not one is forgotten in God’s sight. Why, every hair on your head has been counted. *There is no need to be afraid*: you are worth more than many sparrows.” (Lk 12:6–7, NJB)

You are very precious in God’s eyes. So are your children. God has not forgotten them. He looks after them – just as he has looked after you from your youth, and will continue doing so because you still need him just as much as your children do.

“*Do not let your hearts be troubled*. You trust in God; trust also in me.” (Jn 14:1, NJB)

When you have done all that you can, place everything else in God's hands. Let his power be displayed in the healing of your children and you.

As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be made manifest in him." (Jn 9:1-3, RSV)

Young people have their hardships. They are passing through a difficult stage in life. The devil will try to make you treat them like enemies. Do not be misled by him. Scripture says:

Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings. (1 Pet 5:8-9, NIV)

Jesus' command is to love one another, not hate. Your children are your flesh and blood. If you don't love them, who will?

By love, the Canaanite mother persisted in enlisting Jesus' help to cast out the devil from her daughter – Mt 15:21-28. (Reread the story on page 66.)

Next time the devil attacks by creating a storm in your heart do not fall for his tricks or react irrationally.

Turn to Jesus immediately and ask him to come into the situation.

Go in peace

It takes a long time for young adults to grow and mature. It takes a long time for parents to grow and mature. Parents have lived more years; they should not use their greater age to browbeat their children, or to create more discord and conflict, but to bring affection and peace to their homes. They should not wait to be grandparents for this to happen. Let them begin now.

“Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.” (Mk 9:50, RSV)

There may be occasional troubles and pain, but with God’s help all will be well in the end. Through overcoming your trials and difficulties, you will ripen into understanding and loving Christians.

Do whatever is in your power for your children. Go to the parish library or a trustworthy Catholic bookstore to find a suitable book on parenting. Ask those who might be able to lend a hand, for example, an experienced priest. But above all, pray for your children, have faith in God, do not live in fear.

“Your faith has saved you; go in peace.” (Lk 7:50, NIV) Faith will save your family. Faith will bring peace.

A word to all youths

The work of bringing up the young is not easy. Parents do not always possess enough knowledge or presence of mind to take the best course of action in every situation. You, sons and daughters, can help by your co-operation and love.

Jesus said: "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." (Jn 15:12, RSV)

He also said: "Honour your father and your mother." (Mt 19:19, NJB)

You give them the most honour, love, and peace of mind, by leading lives of great goodness.

Act of Consecration to Jesus

Jesus, when you were twelve years old, you gave your parents quite a scare by secretly remaining in Jerusalem while they were on the road back to Nazareth. They searched anxiously for you and did not find you till the third day. Your mother has since learned how to care for the young in peace. Today, she has millions of children to look after throughout the world. Many of them are worrisome, yet she is able to stay calm and serene.

From this day forward, I consecrate to your Sacred Heart and to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Queen of Peace, myself and my family members. Direct us towards holiness. Help us to pray, to have strong faith and not to be afraid. Help us to live in peace with ourselves and with our families, and be reconciled with one another, loving each other according to the commands you gave in the gospel.

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