



The Saint Francis Xavier's Messenger - #11 - December 2015 ***Newsletter of the Society of Saint Pius X in Sri Lanka***

Advent Season

The Season of Advent, the beginning of the Liturgical Year

The word 'Advent' comes from the Latin prefix '*ad*' which is emphatic and a word '*venire*' which means to come. Thus it means come all the more strongly. This is the church's earnest call to her bridegroom i.e. Christ to come vehemently. What better beginning of the Liturgical Year could be than Advent where we wait for his coming. The liturgical colour for this season is violet for advent is a preparatory season where with penitential spirit we prepare ourselves to welcome Christ, Our Saviour. This season has a special significance because it is a season of looking forward and waiting for something greater, both for the annual celebration of the event of Christ's birth and for the time when Christ will come again.

What the faithful are expected to do

Following the spirit of the season of advent the faithful are bound

- to prepare themselves worthily to celebrate the anniversary of the Lord's coming into the world as the incarnate God as reminded in St. John's Gospel, "for God so loved the world, as to give his only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in him, may not perish, but may have life everlasting." (Jn. 3:16)
- thereby making their souls fitting abodes for the Redeemer coming in Holy Communion and through grace and
- finally to make themselves ready for Christ's

final coming as judge, at death and at the end of the world.

Origin and History of Advent

Concerning the exact time when the season of Advent came into being is not precisely known. Of course, it was not in practice before the celebration of the Nativity and Christmastide began. The earliest evidence shows that the feast of the Nativity of Our Lord was established within the later part of the 4th century. There are homilies from the 5th century that discuss preparation in a general sense, but do not indicate an official liturgical season. A Synod held in 590 established that Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from November 11th until the Nativity would be offered according to the Lenten rite. This and other traditions, such as fasting, show that the period of time now established as the Advent season was more penitential (similar to Lent) than the liturgical season as we know it today.

A collection of homilies from Pope St. Gregory the Great (590-604) included a sermon for the second Sunday of Advent and by 650 Spain was celebrating the Sundays (five at the time) of Advent. So it seems the liturgical season was established around the latter part of the 6th century and first half of the 7th century. For the next couple of centuries, Advent was celebrated for five Sundays; Pope Gregory VII, who was pope from 1073-85, reduced the number to four Sundays.

Advent Today

The themes and traditions of the Advent season have evolved throughout the history of the liturgical season. As mentioned, the early Advent season was mainly penitential, close to the theme of the Lenten season. Today a penitential theme still exists, but it is not as intense as in 7th century. Also, it is blended with the theme of prayerful, spiritual preparation for the second and final coming of the Lord as well as the joyful preparation for the annual festive remembrance of the Incarnation and Christ's birth.

Advent Traditions

There are some traditions which are common throughout the Catholic Church. They are as follows:

The Wreath of Advent: It is the most popular tradition and wreaths are typically present in both the parish church and in the home. It is often circular, representing God's eternity, and it includes 4 candles - one for each Sunday of Advent. Many families have a wreath in the home and will light the candles each Sunday and say Advent prayers together

The Tree of Jesse: It is also a part of Advent tradition. A Jesse Tree, named for the father of David is a tree that is decorated gradually



throughout Advent with symbols or pictures of biblical persons associated with the gradual coming of the Messiah, Christ. This includes, among others, Noah, Abraham, Moses and Joseph and Mary. The Jesse Tree tradition provides a wonderful teaching opportunity. It is a perfect way to teach and remind especially the children about the preparatory nature of Advent so that they may preserve them in their minds and as well as in their hearts and thus make the season of Advent alive in their lives.

Fr. Gregory Noronha

Some points of Catholic Doctrine on Family

Fr. François Laisney

One has been waiting in vain to hear clear doctrine from the Synod of Bishops on the Family, but rather heard very dangerously ambiguous reports. Since the faithful – and the less faithful – do need to receive from the Church the light of clear doctrine, and it behoves a good shepherd to feed his sheep with such proper doctrine, so here are some simple concise considerations that

- [1/ Nature of a family, as God has established it](#)
- [2/ Virtues required for a good family](#)
- [3/ Virtues required to prepare for a good family](#)
- [4/ Vices before the marriage, that will make a good family more difficult](#)
- [5/ Vices within the marriage](#)
- [6/ Obstacles outside the family that make a good family more difficult](#)
- [7/ Helps that can be provided for families to be good](#)
- [8/ After the drama of sin, what can be done? The Mercy of God calls to penance!](#)

Special consideration in special cases:

- [9/ Teenage pregnancy](#)
- [10/ Abortion](#)
- [11/ Imprudent or dysfunctional marriage](#)
- [12/ Broken marriage](#)
- [13/ Divorced and remarriage](#)
- [14/ Unnatural vices](#)

False solutions:

- [15/ "Perverse mercy"](#)
- [16/ Marriage annulments](#)
- [17/ False discernment](#)

1/ Nature of a family, as God has established it

“God who made man from the beginning, made them male and female. And he said: For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they two shall be in one flesh. Therefore now they are not two, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder” (Mt. 19:4-6).

A family is the life-long union of one man and one woman in order to have and educate children to fill Heaven with elects. This sacred bond has been raised to the level of a sacrament by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave it to signify His mystical marriage with his Church, the Catholic Church. Hence husband and wife are united by a spiritual bond, the marriage bond, which “no man can put asunder”.

Marriage is a contract that establishes this bond; the object of this contract is “the act of marriage”, the spouses giving to one another the exclusive right on the other’s body for that act. No one may do this act outside the marriage

The first “good of the marriage” is the children: it is first of all for the sake of the children that the marriage is life-long, because they need their parents for their education, not only until adulthood but even after for good advice. **Good children are the greatest reward of good parents!** “By their fruits you shall know them” (Mt. 7:20). Not every couple can have children, but those who can should have children, and “multiply” according to their ability (one or two children are not sufficient to fulfil this duty: smallest multiplication is by two).

The second good of marriage is the mutual support that spouse give to one another, especially the support for the practice of chastity. It is particularly noticeable in good families.

The third good of marriage is the sacrament, the fact that they signify a higher love, a higher bond, the marriage between our Lord Jesus Christ and His Church.

2/ Virtues required for a good family

The first virtue required is the virtue of **Faith**. Unity of Faith in a family provides the unity of goal and vision of what a good family should be, and thus unites very profoundly the spouse.

Without it, there will be division of views about many important decision (not only education of the children, but even before, on the very will to follow the Law of God with regard to marital relations). Faith will remind the spouses that marriage is not the ultimate happiness, but rather a path to Heaven, path where they help one another in the practice of virtue with “fraternal correction”, not being accomplices in selfish pleasures, but rather learning together the practice of **sacrifice**.

The second required virtue is the virtue of **chastity**: it includes **fidelity** (never to have marital relation outside the marriage), but also with one’s spouse to respect what God has established (unnatural vices are mortal sin even between spouse). It is open to life and never does something to prevent life. It does include a certain mortification and temperance.

The greatest of all virtues, the virtue of **Charity**, has a very special place in a good family, which can be called “a school of charity”. Charity gives and charity unites: this is a whole program for parents and spouses: to give oneself first of all to God and then to one’s spouse and to one’s children. Charity is generous; it is the opposite of selfishness. It does not fear to give life. It is prompt to forgive, yet it educates the children in obedience to the Law of God.

Practically a good family should have **daily family prayer**, i.e. the father, the mother and all the children getting together every day at a set time for prayer. It does not have to be very long, but it ought to be every day. Regularity is what builds good

habits in the children. A good family should have a crucifix or holy picture in every room.

A good family must avoid worldliness. There must be in a good house nothing that is offending God and especially nothing that would offend chastity (bad books, videos, etc.): Archbishop Lefebvre strongly advises not even to have TV. Virtue is not possible without self-renouncement, mortification, and the spirit of sacrifice: children should be taught to make **little sacrifices**.

Since the first purpose of a family is raising good children, **catholic education** is a very important work of good parents, teaching their children the practice of all virtues in a loving environment, not sparing correction to their children, but leading them in the path of obedience to the Commandments of God by their example first and by their loving correction. Good parents willingly make sacrifice to put their children in good Catholic schools.

Parents in a good Catholic family are **hard-working**: in as much as possible, the father should work in such a way that his wife be able to stay at home. When this is possible, it is a great blessing.

3/ Virtues required to prepare for a good family

The Law of God is that one should arrive **virgin** to the day of marriage. This Law is not impossible, since God does not command that which is impossible: young people need to be convinced of its importance. **Fidelity in the marriage is prepared by purity before the marriage**: both are the same, viz. not to have marital relations outside of the marriage! The best guarantee one can give that one is going to be faithful is if one reaches marriage with virginity. This is the best “marriage gift” to one another! It is a wonderful proof that one can be trusted afterwards.

That virtue requires a strict practice of **purity**, avoiding anything that could tarnish it, especially TV, videos, bad pictures, bad books, bad conversations and places of sin. There must be a clear and uncompromised NO to any such thing. Moreover, one must observe **modesty**, which is the guardian of chastity. Even in the relations with one’s fiancé(e), one should keep proper **reserve**, and remember that not only the act of marriage but also certain intimacies are proper only within the marriage: what they would not like the other to do with a third person after the marriage, they are not entitled to do before.

Since the virtue of **Faith** is so important in the marriage, it is evidently also very important in the preparation to a good marriage: both in the choice of a future spouse, and in the actual preparation, which is an occasion to deepen the knowledge of the Catholic Faith in many domain (not only on marriage, but on social duties in the workplace, on education of children, etc.) Let the youth have eternal beatitude and the punishment of hell in front of their eyes, to help them make the right choices. It would be foolishness to endanger one’s eternal salvation through imprudent choices in youth.

Since a good marriage is a gift of God, it ought to be prepared by much **prayer**: prayer for self to keep the required virtues, prayer for the future spouse, prayer to have the grace to fulfil their duties... It goes without saying that prayer together can be done before marriage, and should be, and prepares beautifully for family prayer.

It goes without saying that a good marriage requires that there be **no impediment**: before even considering marrying someone, one must make sure of this (e.g. that he/she has not been married before!) One **must not even start a friendship** with someone who has an impediment.

To be continued...

TUE 1 December	FERIA 7.15 – Low Mass 5.30 – Low Mass	NO MASS	14-19 December
WED 2 December	ST. BIBIANA 7.15 – Low Mass	4 th SUNDAY OF ADVENT NO MASS	SUN 20 December
THU 3 December	ST. FRANCIS XAVIER 7.15 – Low Mass 4.50 – <i>Rosary & Benediction</i> 5.30 – Sung Mass	NO MASS	MON 21 December
FRI 4 December	FIRST FRIDAY 7.15 – Low Mass 5.30 – Low Mass	FERIA 5.30 – Low Mass	TUE 22 December
SAT 5 December	FIRST SATURDAY 5.30 – Low Mass	FERIA 5.30 – Low Mass	WED 23 December
SUN 6 December	2 nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT 8.30 – <i>Rosary</i> 9.00 – Sung Mass	VIGIL OF THE NATIVITY 10.00pm – <i>Confession</i> 11.00pm – Sung Mass	THU 24 December
MON 7 December	ST. AMBROSE 7.15 – Low Mass 5.30 – Low Mass	NATIVITY OF OLJC 8.30 – <i>Rosary</i> 9.00 – Sung Mass	FRI 25 December
TUE 8 December	IMMACULATE CONCEPTION 7.15 – Low Mass 5.30 – Sung Mass	ST. STEPHEN 5.30 – Low Mass	SAT 26 December
WED 9 December	FERIA 5.30 – Low Mass	S. W/IN THE OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS 5.30 – <i>Rosary</i> 6.00pm – Sung Mass	SUN 27 December
THU 10 December	FERIA 4.50 – <i>Rosary & Benediction</i> 5.30 – Low Mass	HOLY INNOCENTS 5.30 – Low Mass	MON 28 December
FRI 11 December	ST. DAMASUS 5.30 – Low Mass	W/IN THE OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS 5.30 – Low Mass	TUE 29 December
SAT 12 December	FERIA 5.30 – Low Mass	W/IN THE OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS 5.30 – Low Mass	WED 30 December
SUN 13 December	3 rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT 8.30 – <i>Rosary</i> 9.00 – Sung Mass	W/IN THE OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS 4.50 – <i>Rosary & Benediction</i> 5.30 – Low Mass	THU 31 December

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Priests' Presence: Fr. BW (1-8/12; 11-13/12; 27-31/12); Fr. GN (1-10/12; 28-31/12). Fr. Loschi (29-31/12). Fr. Karl Stehlin will be with us from 1 to 4 December. There will be no priest (and no Mass) from 14 to 21 December.

No Sunday Mass: 20 December. On Sunday, 27 December: Mass at 6pm.

The Catechism in pictures is available for LKR750.