

Pope: The family teaches how to say 'Yes' to God
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Pope Benedict reflected on the Family before reciting the Sunday Angelus on the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

He said the Christian family does not consider children possessions, but educates them to have the freedom which enables them to say yes to God, and to do his will.

In the Gospel reading, Jesus, just 12, is in the temple, without his parents knowing. Pope Benedict says in this passage we see the true meaning of Christian education, which is the fruit of an ongoing collaboration between educators and God.

VIS-Press releases

SAFEGUARD THE FAMILY FOUNDED ON MARRIAGE

VATICAN CITY, 27 DEC 2009 (VIS) -

Before praying the Angelus on this Sunday of the Holy Family, the Pope reminded the faithful gathered in St. Peter's Square that "God wished to reveal Himself by being born in a human family, and hence the human family has become an icon of God.

"God is Trinity", he added. "He is communion of love, and the family - with all the difference that exists between the Mystery of God and His human creature - is an expression thereof which reflects the unfathomable mystery of God-Love. ... The human family is, in a certain sense, the icon of the Trinity because of the love between its members and the fruitfulness of that love".

Commenting then on today's Gospel reading which narrates how the twelve- year-old Jesus stayed behind in the Temple without His parents' knowledge, the Pope explained that "Jesus' decision to remain in the Temple was above all the fruit of his intimate relationship with the Father, but also the fruit of the education received from Mary and Joseph".

And he went on: "Here we may catch a glimpse of the authentic meaning of Christian education. It is the result of a collaboration that must always be sought between the educators and God. The Christian family is aware that children are God's gift and project. Hence it cannot consider them as its own possessions but, serving God's plan through them, is called to educate them in the greatest of freedoms which is that of saying 'yes' to God in order to accomplish His will".

The Holy Father then addressed some remarks to participants in the Feast of the Holy Family which is being celebrated today in Madrid, Spain. "God, by having come into the world in the bosom of a family, shows that this institution is a sure way to meet and know Him, and a permanent call to work for the loving unity of all people. Thus, one of the greatest services which we as Christians can offer our fellow men and women is to show them the serene and solid witness of a family founded upon marriage between a man and a woman, defending it and protecting it, because it is of supreme importance for the present and future of humankind.

"In truth, the family is the best school in which to learn to live the values that dignify individuals and make peoples great. There too sufferings and joys are shared, as everyone feels cloaked in the affection that reigns in the home by the mere fact of being members of the same family".

Benedict XVI prayed to God that family homes may always experience "this love of total commitment and fidelity which Jesus brought into the world by His birth, nourishing and strengthening it with daily prayer, the constant practice of virtue, reciprocal understanding and mutual respect.

"I encourage you - trusting in the maternal intercession of Mary Most Holy, Queen of Families, and the powerful protection of St. Joseph, her husband - tirelessly to dedicate yourselves to this beautiful mission the Lord has placed in your hands. Be sure of my closeness and affection", he concluded, "and I pray you carry a very special greeting from the Pope to those of your loved ones who suffer greatest need and difficulties".

