

Pope: The Family Is Essential For Building A Civilization Of Love

By Thaddeus M. Baklinski

May 19, 2009 (lifeSiteNews.com) - In a homily at the Mount of the Precipice in Nazareth on Thursday, Pope Benedict XVI affirmed the irreplaceable importance of true marriage and families in achieving a civilization of love.

The Holy Father said that, following the example of Mary, Joseph and Jesus, the Holy Family of Nazareth, "we come to appreciate even more fully the sacredness of the family, which in God's plan is based on the lifelong fidelity of a man and a woman consecrated by the marriage covenant and accepting of God's gift of new life."

"How much the men and women of our time need to re-appropriate this fundamental truth, which stands at the foundation of society, and how important is the witness of married couples for the formation of sound consciences and the building of a civilisation of love."

The Pope said that the family is the "first building block" of a compassionate and civilized society, and highlighted the obligation of the state to "protect the institution of the family and its inherent rights."

"In the family each person, whether the smallest child or the oldest relative, is valued for himself or herself, and not seen simply as a means to some other end. Here we begin to glimpse something of the essential role of the family as the first building block of a well-ordered and welcoming society. We also come to appreciate, within the wider community, the duty of the State to support families in their mission of education, to protect the institution of the family and its inherent rights, and to ensure that all families can live and flourish in conditions of dignity."

Pope Benedict had a special word for the children present at the Mass, telling them to "let the example of Jesus guide you, not only in showing respect for your parents, but also helping them to discover more fully the love which gives our lives their deepest meaning. In the Holy Family of Nazareth, it was Jesus who taught Mary and Joseph something of the greatness of the love of God."

The pope also noted how from St. Joseph's "strong and fatherly example" Jesus "learned the virtues of a manly piety, fidelity to one's word, integrity and hard work. In the carpenter of Nazareth he saw how authority placed at the service of love is infinitely more fruitful than the power which seeks to dominate. How much our world needs the example, guidance and quiet strength of men like Joseph!"

The Holy Father concluded by calling on everyone to reaffirm their commitment "to be a leaven of respect and love in the world around us," and expressed his "gratitude and praise for all those who strive to bring God's love to the children of this town, and to educate new generations in the ways of peace. I think in a special way of the local Churches, particularly in their schools and charitable institutions, to break down walls and to be a seedbed of encounter, dialogue, reconciliation and solidarity."

Link to original text from Vatican Information Service:

http://212.77.1.245/news_services/press/vis/dinamiche/b3_en.htm

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