

THE CHRISTIAN MYSTERY

THE FAMILY IN GOD'S PLAN

Biblical Reflection: Lk 2:41-52

The fourth commandment opens the second table of the Decalogue. It shows us the order of charity. God has willed that, after him, we should honor our parents to whom we owe life and who have handed on to us the knowledge of God. We are obliged to honor and respect all those whom



God, for our good, has vested with his authority. (CCC 2197)

The conjugal community is established upon the consent of the spouses. Marriage and the family are ordered to the good of the spouses and to the procreation and education of children. The love of the spouses and the begetting of children create among members of the same family personal relationships and primordial responsibilities. (CCC 2201)

Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children in the faith, prayer, and all the virtues. They have the duty to provide as far as possible for the physical and spiritual needs of their children. (CCC 2252)

“The political community has a duty to honor the family, to assist it, and to ensure especially:

- ✓ *the freedom to establish a family, have children, and bring them up in keeping with the family’s own moral and religious convictions;*
- ✓ *the protection of the stability of the marriage bond and the institution of the family;*
- ✓ *the freedom to profess one’s faith, to hand it on, and raise one’s children in it, with the necessary means and institutions;*
- ✓ *the right to private property, the free enterprise, to obtain work, and housing, and the right to emigrate;*
- ✓ *in keeping with the country’s institutions, the right to medical care, assistance for the aged, and family benefits;*
- ✓ *the protection of security and health, especially with respect to dangers like drugs, pornography, alcoholism, etc.;... St. John Paul II, FC 46 (CCC 2211)*

Questions for discussion:

- **What feelings do you have when we talk about the family?**
- **What memories do you have about your family of origin?**
- **What are your difficulties with your family? How can they be resolved?**
- **Express your opinion about some of the points raised by St. John Paul II (cf. CCC 2211)**
- **Do you think that, especially today, family and marriage are a priority of the Church’s urgent pastoral care? What could we do about this?**

Further reading: Catechism of the Catholic Church, numbers 2196-2257