

Familia Fidelis

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“The Christian family constitutes a specific revelation and realization of ecclesial communion, and for this reason it can and should be called a *domestic church*. It is a community of faith, hope, and charity....”

(*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2204)

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For Mom and Dad—The Courage to be Married

“It may not take courage to make a promise, but it can take a lot of courage to keep a promise. This is especially true for the promises we make on our wedding day. Here are a few of those everyday challenges couples often face. You’ll surely find your own.

The courage to say what needs to be said: I suspect that most marriages aren’t harmed as much by what is said as by what is left unsaid. Withholding our truth from one another can kill a marriage. This can range from failing to express one’s love (in words, in deeds, in conscientious responses), to not standing up for oneself, to failing to speak up when something’s wrong in your marriage but you don’t want to rock the boat. Pay attention to what you resist saying. A friend of mine says that when it comes to knowing what inner work we should do, ‘resistance always points true north.’

The courage to do your own inner work: What behaviors of yours are robbing your marriage? It may be busy-ness, alcohol, anger, compulsive spending, or a whole long list of other distractions and cheap substitutions for the mutual self-revelation that marriage calls us to. Over time, any one of these can kill a marriage. If in your marriage you find yourself doing what you know you don’t want and shouldn’t do, have the courage to get help. It’s funny that people show disdain for turning to a counselor or 12-Step group because they feel it shows weakness, when in truth picking up the phone to make a call for help takes more courage than most things we’ll ever do. Be courageous!

The courage to welcome and let go: One of the greatest challenges of marriage is to find gracious ways to welcome this other person into your life—to make their wants and wishes and needs as much a concern for you

as your own wants and wishes and needs. Marriage is all about welcoming—our new spouse, their family and friends, their quirks and foibles, even their maddening habits. We need to do more than tolerate, we are called to welcome and cherish all of who this person is. It takes courage to open up our lives and invite another in. It takes courage to overcome our own habits of selfishness. And when we do, we swiftly learn that we also need to exercise the Christian virtue of letting go—letting go of old habits and new expectations. And oddly enough, if we are to keep our marriage alive and growing, we need to let go of how our marriage was last year or how we think it *ought* to be and grow into what our marriage requires or us today. You will change and so will your spouse. Each day, in effect, you need to say, ‘Once again, I choose you.’”

~Tom McGrath

ForYourMarriage.org

For Teens—How do I “honor my father and mother”?

[The following is an excerpt from *Did Adam and Eve Have Belly Buttons?* By Matthew Pinto]

Question: “What exactly does the commandment ‘Honor your father and mother’ encompass?”

Answer: First, it means obeying your parents because they exercise God-given authority over

you (Col. 3:20; Eph. 6:1-3; CCC 2197). It also means being grateful to your parents for the gift of life (Sir. 7:28; Prv. 23:22; CCC 2215). And you are to care for your parents when they can no longer care for themselves (Sir. 3:12-16; CCC 2218).

Children should obey their parents as long as parental wishes are not contrary to the Catholic

faith, while they live in their parents’ home, and until they reach adulthood (CCC 2217). After that time, children are still required to love and honor their parents but not necessarily obey them, as they are then old enough to make their own decisions.

The fourth commandment applies to more than just the par-



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Blessed Vicente was dismissed as a professor at the local ceramics trade school because he was Catholic.



For Teens...Continued

ent-child relationship. It requires us to obey lawful superiors, including teachers and those who govern (1 Thess. 5:12-13). Again, this assumes one is not directed to do something that is contrary to the faith.

The fourth commandment also places a reciprocal duty on parents and those who exercise other forms of authority. Parents should educate and raise their children in the faith (Eph. 6:4; CCC 2252). They should respect their children

as persons, disciplining them when necessary and providing for their physical, spiritual, educational, and social needs as best they can (1 Tim. 5:8). In short, parents are obliged to love their children.

Question: “How do you know when God is talking to you?”

Answer: The more we pray and are silent before God, the more we can know His will for our lives (Lam. 3:25-26); 1 Kgs 19:11-12; Prv 3:5-6; Mt. 7:7-

11). God also reveals His will to us through signs, both small and large. So keep an eye open for unique occurrences, answered prayers, and an overall peace that comes about when you have made good choices (1 Jn. 3:19-22).

Most importantly, God speaks to us through His Word. This Word comes to us in the person of Jesus Christ, who is the Word made flesh (Jn. 1:1); through the Bible; and through Sacred Tradition as handed on by the Church.

For Children—Lego Creationary



My wife and I live with a Lego addict—perhaps you do too? But even if you don't **Creationary** is a game well worth adding to your family's collection.

The basic game play of Creationary is simple. A player

rolls a die which reveals a category to them (nature, object, vehicle, structure). The player then draws a card and has to construct the object listed on the card for that category out of legos (for example, if the die came up with the category “nature” and the card the player draws has a picture of a tree in the “nature” section, they would need to make a tree out of legos). If one of the other players guesses what is being made before it is fin-

ished, they get a point and the builder gets a point. The first person to earn 5 points wins.

The game is fun, fast paced, and encourages creativity and problem solving. Parents will find the game just as challenging as their kids or they can team up with younger children to help them out. The cards also come in 3 different levels of difficulty, so as kids get older the game will grow with them.

Friends for Families—Blessed Vicente Vilar David

Vicente Vilar David was born in Spain, on June 28, 1889, the youngest of eight children. He spread a Christian outlook and morality among his peers and was known for his charity to the poor. He worked as an industrial engineer in the family ceramics firm and held several important municipal posts in which he put the Church's social teaching into practice. He married Isabel Rodes Reig (d. 1993), the main witness of

his life and martyrdom. In addition to his constant efforts on behalf of workers, he was involved in parish activities and Catholic youth groups. He was steadfast in his convictions despite the growing anti-religious sentiment in Spain in 1931, and, attempting to save persecuted priests and religious, offered them hospitality. Unafraid, he continued to live a normal life rather than hide as did many for fear of arrest, and

to do good to all until his martyrdom on February 14, 1937. As he was taken away, his wife said to him: “See you tomorrow!”, and he answered, “Until tomorrow or in heaven!”. A few minutes later shots were heard. The employees of his ceramics firm went on strike for three days in protest—a dangerous act in those days. He was beatified by Pope John Paul II on October 1, 1995.