

Holy Family - December 2021

Dying of loneliness:

In an audience, Pope Paul VI told how one day, when he was Archbishop of Milan, he went out on parish visitation. During the course of the visitation he found an old woman living alone. 'How are you?' he asked her. 'Not bad,' she answered. 'I have enough food, and I'm not suffering from the cold.' 'You must be reasonably happy then?' he said. 'No, I'm not', she said as she started to cry. 'You see, my son and daughter-in-law never come to see me. I'm dying of loneliness.'

Afterwards he was haunted by the phrase 'I'm dying of loneliness'. And the Pope concluded: 'Food and warmth are not enough in themselves. People need something more. They need our presence, our time, our love. They need to be touched, to be reassured that they are not forgotten' (Flor McCarthy in *New Sunday and Holy Day Liturgies*).(<https://frtonyshomilies.com/>) L/21

"Am I not a family valuable?"

Rabbi Neil Kurshan in his book *Raising Your Child to be a Mensch* (a Yiddish word for a person having admirable characteristics such as fortitude and firmness of purpose), tells this real story:

A young woman about to be married had come to the Rabbi for counseling. When she told the Rabbi that she hoped she would not make the same mistakes her parents had made, he pressed her to elaborate.

The woman explained that each summer her wealthy parents traveled to Europe while she remained behind with a nanny. One year, when the girl was 11, the housekeeper suddenly quit just shortly before her parents' annual trip to Europe. Upset that their vacation might be jeopardized, the parents quickly found a replacement.

A few days before their departure, the girl noticed that her mother had wrapped the family jewels and silverware and placed them in the safe. Since this had never been done before, she asked why.

Her mother explained that she could not trust the new housekeeper with the family valuables. — Though certainly not intended, that insensitive remark so shocked and hurt the little girl that she never forgot it.

Wasn't she a family valuable? Didn't she have more value than silver knives and silver forks? That is a question all of us could ask about our attitudes toward dependent family members, young, old, or in-between, this Holy Family Day. (<https://frtonyshomilies.com/>) L/21

**"Those God makes six-eight have to look out for
those He makes three-three."**

(Jesse Jackson tells the story of a visit he made to the University of Southern Mississippi). While touring the campus with the university president, he saw a towering male student, six-feet, eight-inches tall, holding hands with a fidgety coed barely three-feet tall. What a contrast, six-feet, eight-inches tall and only three-feet tall.

His curiosity piqued, Jackson watched as the young man, dressed in a warm-up suit, tenderly kissed the tiny coed, and sent her off to class.

The president said that the student was a star basketball player. Both parents had passed away when he was a teenager, and he made a vow to look after his sister.

Many scholarships came his way, but only Southern Mississippi offered one to his sister, too. Jackson went over to the basketball star, introduced himself, and said he appreciated the way he was looking out for his sister. The athlete shrugged and said, "Those of us who God makes six-eight have to look out for those He makes three-three."

(3) -Don't you wish every young person could have that kind of love for his or her siblings? We live lives of Faith and we look out for those we love. (Rev. Duncan). (<https://frtonyshomilies.com/>) L/21