

POPE FRANCIS' GENERAL AUDIENCE: On Family Life

“The family is endowed with an extraordinary capacity to understand, direct and sustain the genuine value of the time of celebration.”

Vatican City, publication time August 12, 2015 (ZENIT.org) article authors [Staff Reporter](#)

Dear Brothers and Sisters, good morning!

Today we begin a short course of reflection on three dimensions that beat the time, so to speak, of the rhythm of family life: celebration, work and prayer.

We begin with celebration. Today we will speak of celebration. And we say immediately that a celebration is an invention of God. We recall the conclusion of the account of Creation in the Book of Genesis, which we heard: “And on the seventh day God finished his work which he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all his work which he had done in creation” (2:2-3). God himself teaches us the importance of dedicating a time to contemplate and enjoy what was well done in work. I speak of work, of course, not only in the sense of a job or profession, but in the wider sense: every action with which we men and women can collaborate in the creative work of God.

Therefore, a celebration is not the laziness of being in an armchair, or the elation of a foolish evasion, no. A celebration is first of all a loving and thankful look on work well done; we celebrate a work. Also you, newlyweds, are celebrating the work of a good time of engagement: and this is beautiful! It is the time to look at children or grandchildren who are growing and to think: how lovely! It is the time to look at our home, the guests we entertain, the community that surrounds us, and to think: what a good thing! God did this when he created the world, and he does so continually because God always creates, also at this moment!

It can happen that a celebration arrives in difficult or painful circumstances, and one celebrates perhaps “with a lump in one’s throat.” Yet, in these cases also we ask God for the strength not to divest it completely. You mothers and fathers know this well: how many times, out of love for the children, you are able to put aside displeasures to let them live a celebration well, to taste the good sense of life! There is so much love in this!

Sometimes in the work environment also – without failing in duties – we are able to “infiltrate” a burst of celebration: a birthday, a marriage, a new birth, as also a departure or a new arrival ... it’s important. It’s important to celebrate. They are moments of familiarity in the gears of the productive machine: it does us good!

However, a true time of celebration halts professional work and is sacred, because it reminds man and woman that they are made in the image of God, who is not a slave of work, but Lord; therefore, we also must never be slaves of work, but “lords.” There is a commandment for this, a commandment that concerns all; no one is excluded! And instead we know that there are millions of men and women and even children that are slaves of work! In this time they are slaves, they are exploited, slaves of work and this is against God and against the dignity of the human person! The obsession of economic profit and the efficiency of technology put at risk the human rhythms of life, because life has its human rhythms. A time of rest, especially that of Sunday, is given to us so that we can enjoy what is not produced or consumed, not purchased or sold. And instead we see that the ideology of profit and consumption also wants to consume the celebration: the latter is also reduced sometimes to a “doing,” to a way of making and spending money. But do we work for this? The greed of consuming, which entails waste is an awful virus that, among other things, in the end makes us feel more tired than before. It harms true work and consumes life. The disorderly rhythms of a celebration create victims -- often young people.

Finally, the time of celebration is sacred because God dwells in it in a special way. The Sunday Eucharist brings to a celebration all the grace of Jesus Christ: his presence, his love, his sacrifice, his making us community, his being with us ... And in this way every reality receives its full meaning: work, family, the joys and efforts of every day, also suffering and death; everything is transfigured by the grace of Christ.

The family is endowed with an extraordinary capacity to understand, direct and sustain the genuine value of the time of celebration. But how lovely are the celebrations in the family, they are most beautiful! – and, in particular, those of Sunday. It is no accident that the celebrations in which there is place for the whole family are those that succeed better! Family life itself, looked at with the eyes of faith, seems better than the efforts it costs. It seems a masterpiece of simplicity, good precisely because it is not artificial, or false, but able to incorporate in itself all the aspects of a true life. It appears as something “very good,” as God says at the end of the creation of man and of woman (cf. *Genesis* 1:31). Therefore, a celebration is a precious gift of God; a precious gift that God has made to the human family: let’s not ruin it!

***Perpetual Novena in honor of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal
Tuesdays at 8:15 Mass.***

St. Gerard Catholic Church

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

August 16, 2015

640 Edrie St. NE

Aiken, SC 29801

803 649-3203



SUNDAY READINGS

First Reading:
Proverbs 9:1-6,

Responsorial:
Psalms 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7

Second Reading:
Ephesians 5:15-20,

Gospel: *John 6:51-58*

Lectionary Readings for the week for August 16th

Monday: *Judges 2:11-19;
Matthew 19: 16-22*

Tuesday: *Judges 6:11-24a;
Matthew 19:23-30*

Wednesday: *Judges 9:6-15;
Matthew 20:1-16*

Thursday: *Judges 11:29-39a;
Matthew 22:1-14*

Friday: *Ruth 1:1, 3-6, 14b-16, 22;
Matthew 22:34-40*



I am the living bread which has come down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live for ever; and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, for the life of the world. Then the Jews started arguing among themselves, 'How can this man give us his flesh to eat?' Jesus replied to them: In all truth I tell you, if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Anyone who does eat my flesh and drink my blood has eternal life, and I shall raise that person up on the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I live in that person. John 6:51-56

Mass Times: Weekdays Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 8:15 AM, First Friday Benediction after Mass
Weekend Saturday 4:00 PM, Sunday 7:00 AM and 11:15 AM

Confessions: after weekday Masses and by Appointment

Office Hours: 9:00 AM till 3:00 PM Tuesday - Thursday

Bible Study: Fridays 10:00 AM this fall

Baptisms, Confirmations and Marriages By Appointment, Contact the office.

Contact Us: [Phone 803 649-3203](tel:8036493203), [E-Mail stgerardscatholi@atlanticbbn.net](mailto:stgerardscatholi@atlanticbbn.net)

Facebook @stgerardaiken, **Emergency number for Father** 803 637-2027

Fr. Emmanuel Andinam: Administrator



