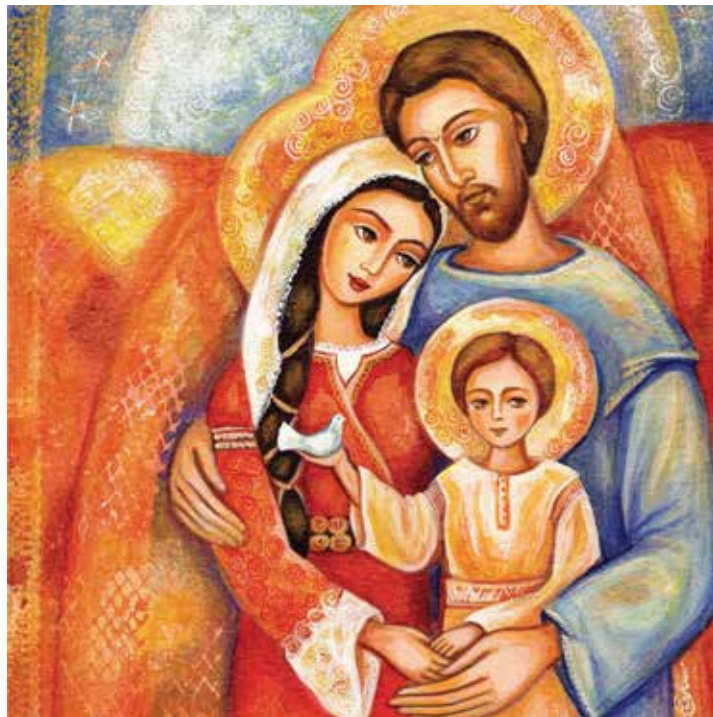


Holy Family Project

STUDY GUIDES

EPISODE ONE Humanae Vitae
EPISODE TWO: Fruitful Mothers
EPISODE THREE: Fearless Children
EPISODE FOUR: Faithful Fathers



Holy Families are POWERFUL!

PULSE
life ADVOCATES

Fewer couples are choosing marriage these days, opting for cohabitation or single parenting. Marriage rates are at an all-time low at 6.5 marriages per 1000 people. And yet there is such power and beauty to be experienced if you choose to form a Holy Family.

Holy families are built on a foundation of faith with God at its center. The commitment of a sacramental marriage is its brick and mortar, leading to more fulfilling long term family-life. By any metric, whether financial, health, or child-rearing, the holy family model produces dramatically better outcomes.

Why would anyone choose anything else? A competing model has emerged, which is called the 'soul-mate' model. How well is that working for us? When Christ is the cornerstone of our homes and marriages, we can weather the storms of family life better.

Pulse has launched an entire project on THE HOLY FAMILY, because abortion is less likely to occur among married couples. According to the National Abortion Federation (no friend to holy families or the unborn), 83% of women who have abortions are unmarried.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church explains why marriage and holy families go together:

"There are two inseparable ends of marriage: the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of children. The education of children in faith, love, and wisdom is a vital task of married parental love (Catechism of the Catholic Church 2249)

Pulse affirms the power and beauty of the holy family without disparaging the efforts of single parents to raise healthy, holy children. Our views mirror those of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops: *"We support and applaud the often heroic efforts of single-parent families. We also emphasize the value of parents staying together and sacrificing to raise children."*

This study guide is designed to lead to ideas and conversation after watching each of the four Holy Family segments.

LITANY OF TRUST

by The Sisters of Life

From the belief that I have to earn Your love...**DELIVER ME JESUS**
From the fear that I am unlovable... **DELIVER ME JESUS**
From the false security that I have what it takes...
From the fear that trusting You will leave me more destitute...
From all suspicion of Your words and promises...
From the rebellion against childlike dependency on You...
From refusals and reluctances in accepting Your will...
From anxiety about the future...
From resentment or excessive preoccupation with the past...
From restless self-seeking in the present moment...
From disbelief in Your love and presence...
From the fear of being asked to give more than I have...
From the belief that my life has no meaning or worth...
From the fear of what love demands...
From discouragement.. **DELIVER ME JESUS**

That I am Your beloved one... **JESUS, I TRUST IN YOU.**
That You are continually holding me, sustaining me, loving me...
JESUS, I TRUST IN YOU.
That Your love goes deeper than my sins & failings and transforms me...
That not knowing what tomorrow brings is an invitation to lean on You...
That You are with me in my suffering...
That my suffering, united to Your own will bear fruit in this life and the next...
That You will not leave me orphan, that You are present in Your Church...
That Your plan is better than anything else...
That You always hear me and in Your goodness always respond to me...
That You give me the grace to accept forgiveness and to forgive others...
That You give me all the strength I need for what is asked...
That my life is a gift...
That You will teach me to trust You...
That You are my Lord and my God...
That I am Your beloved one... **JESUS, I TRUST IN YOU.**

SISTERS OF LIFE

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Written by Sr. Faustina Maria Pia, SV

Episode 1: Humanae Vitae

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. Consider some of these points brought out in this episode's discussion. Do you agree with them?

Why or why not?

a. God will empower us with what we need, but we must commit ourselves by converting our lives to Jesus Christ by working with His grace to do so.

b. Mother Saint Teresa of Calcutta: Peace begins in the womb. The greatest destroyer of peace is abortion.

c. Every [individual] person is deemed worthy enough for Jesus to die.

d. The family is the way of the Church. Holy families are the answer to problems rightfully predicted by Pope Saint Paul VI in *Humanae Vitae*: increased conjugal infidelity, general lowering of morality, loss of respect for and objectification of the woman.

2. If the real purpose of contraception is to prevent pregnancies, why have both contraception usage and abortions risen so dramatically since the 1960s? Are the alleged gains of contraception worth the documented increased risks of death, divorce, loneliness, cancer, suicide, and involuntary termination of pregnancies? Is contraception really a means to prevent pregnancy or to indulge lust? **Reference: Contraception: Why Not?, Janet Smith, PhD, multiple versions with millions of copies sold, now available as a free download at janetsmith.org*

3. For you personally, what obstacles stand in the way of you living the life of fruitfulness, faithfulness, and fearlessness to which you may live life joyfully to its fullest? What must you do to minimize or eliminate those obstacles?

4. You are beloved. What is your first reaction to those three words? If you believe it, how do you reciprocate such love to God and to those who love you? If you don't believe or struggle with it, to whom are you listening, and to whom should you be listening? (Hint: it is not a talk show host or best-selling author).

Suggested Resources:

Humanae Vitae (Of Human Life), Encyclical Letter of Paul VI. Pauline Press. 1968 www.tobinstitute.org

Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body. John Paul II (translated by Michael Waldstein). Pauline Books and Media. 2006

The Theology of the Body: Human Love in the Divine Plan. John Paul II. Pauline Books and Media. 1997

The Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2nd Edition. Pope John Paul II. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. 2000

Love and Responsibility. Karol Wojtyla. Ignatius Press. 1993

The Genesis of Gender: A Christian Theory. Abigail Favale. Ignatius Press. 2022

Theology of the Body Explained: A Commentary on John Paul II's Gospel of the Body. Christopher West. Pauline Books and Media. 2003

Theology of the Body for Beginners: Rediscovering the Meaning of Life, Love, Sex, and Gender. Beacon Publishing. 2004, 2009, 2018.

Episode 2: Fruitful Mothers

STUDY QUESTIONS:

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. In the language of love, what do the following "say":
 - a. Our bodies as male and female?
 - b. Intimate/Sensual Acts?
 - c. Conceiving children?
 - d. Contraception?
 - e. Abortion?

2. Conceiving, birthing, and raising children are obvious demonstrations of fruitfulness. What are other ways that persons can be fruitful, including those who are infertile or celibate?

3. Is Mary's fiat, "Be it done unto me according to thy word," an expression of passivity or of fruitfulness? Explain.

4. Reflect on your self and your life. How can you be more fruitful? Identify both the physical and mental obstacles that limit your total gift of self to God, others, and yourself. What should you do to reduce or eliminate those obstacles.

5. You are beloved. What is your first reaction to those three words? If you believe it, how do you reciprocate such love to God and to those who love you? If you don't believe or struggle with it, to whom are you listening, and to whom should you be listening? (Hint: it is not a talk show host or best-selling author).

Suggested Resources:

www.tobinstitute.org

Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body. John Paul II (translated by Michael Waldstein). Pauline Books and Media. 2006

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Humanae Vitae. Pope Paul VI. Ignatius Press. 2000

"Litany of Trust" (attached). Sisters of Life/www.sistersoflife.org

Episode 3: Fearless Children

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. We often allow fear to be the criterion or deciding factor in our decision making. Our Lord, however, teaches us the exact opposite: Fear not! This does not mean that we shouldn't experience dread, but He is calling us to have courage and hope amidst a fallen world full of perils. What are your current fears for your family and your children? What would alleviate these fears? Do your "solutions" include Christ? How?
2. Both Mary (cf. Lk 1:30) and Joseph (cf. Mt 1:20) of the Holy Family were visited by angels who tell them to not be afraid as they began their journey into parenthood. We are not greeted by angels when we become parents, but we trust that God wants us to not be afraid to conceive, bear, and raise children since they are also His beloved children. What experiences in your parenting life where you recognized that God was with you as you struggled?
3. Dr. Ray Guarendi suggests that if one day our kids become wayward it should be because they've gone through us rather than having us caving in. This means that we raise our children with principles and values that are non-negotiable. What are the top five principles and/or values that you consider are non-negotiables? How do you teach your children these principles/and or values?

4. Truth and falsity are often murky at best in our current culture. Mgr. Chiodo tells us that truth can only be so if it is built on the foundation of Jesus, who is Truth Himself. What steps are you taking to teach your children the truth of the faith, the truth of who they are, and the truth of what we are about as Christians?

5. Self-esteem used by psychologists, as Dr. Guarendi suggests, is the confidence of knowing our worth but without relation and context to being a beloved son or daughter of God. This often leads to self-absorption and selfishness. How have you taught your children to be self-loving while also always with an eye towards charity for others?

Suggested Resources:

A Catechism for Family Life : Insights from Catholic Teaching on Love, Marriage, Sex, and Parenting (Sarah Bartel and John S Grabowski)

Sacred Marriage: What if God Designed Marriage to Make Us Holy More than to Make Us Happy? (Gary Thomas)

Siblings without Rivalry (Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish)

The Case for Catholic Education: Why Parents, Teachers, and Politicians Should Reclaim the Principles of Catholic Pedagogy (Ryan N.S. Topping)

Familiaris Consortio (Saint John Paul II)

NACFLM - National Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers <https://nacflm.org/>

Youtube videos of the talks given at the NACFLM conferences

Episode 4: Faithful Fathers

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. How is your relationship with St. Joseph? Have you seen him as the greatest Saint behind Mary?
2. The Church has bestowed many titles on St. Joseph from Mirror of Patience, to Most Chaste, to Pillar of Families, to Terror of Demons, and dozens more; look through the list of his titles, where can he intercede for you and your family today?
3. Because very little is written about him, we must use our spiritual eyes to grow deeper with him. Think of a time in the life of Joseph (holding the Christ child, teaching Him his craft, playing games with Jesus, praying with Mary and Jesus, etc.); what sticks out to you in his daily occurrences with Mary and Jesus?
4. In a world/culture where fatherlessness & absentee fathers are common, how can St. Joseph be the model for Fatherhood in our time and in your family?
5. If Jesus or the Blessed Mother appears to someone, they often become a Saint. St. Joseph physically held both of them in his arms, loved them, and felt their love. Using St. Joseph as a model, how can we cultivate this closeness with Jesus and Mary in our own lives?

Suggested Resources:

Scripture

- Matthew 1:18-25
- Matthew 2:1-23
- Luke 1:26-38
- Luke 2:1-51

From the Catechism of the Catholic Church

- Part I, section II, chapter II, article II, paragraphs II - 497
- Part III, section I, chapter I, article VIII, paragraph I - 1846
- Feast of Saint Joseph -Part II, section II, chapter I, article II, paragraph II - 2177
- Obedience of Jesus to Joseph -Part I, section II, chapter II, article II, paragraph II. -532

Books

- Consecration to St. Joseph by Father Donald Calloway is a must read
- Patris Corde, by Pope Francis
- St. Joseph and His World by Mike Aquilina

Practical tips for families

Celebrate St. Joseph's Feast Days

- March 19th - The Solemnity of St. Joseph
- January 23: Feast of the Holy Spouses
- February 2: The Presentation of the Lord
- May 1: The Feast of St. Joseph the Worker
- August 21: Feast of Our Lady of Knock
- December 10: Our Lady of Loreto
- December 26: Feast of the Holy Family
- Every Wednesday

Activities

- Seven Sundays of Saint Joseph Devotion. This is a long-standing tradition of the Church in preparation for the feast of St. Joseph on March 19. The devotion begins on the seventh Sunday before March 19 and honors the seven joys and seven sorrows that St. Joseph experienced as husband of the Mother of God, faithful guardian of Christ, and head of the holy family
- Saint Joseph's Day Table - a tradition originating in Sicily to honor St. Joseph on his Feast Day



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