

# Christmas Cheer

December 19, 2009

Here is some good news for Christmas, drawn from England's "Catholic Herald" of Dec. 11: a report from the United States tells that the present economic recession is helping marriages. The recession began towards the end of 2007. In that year the divorce rate in the USA was 17.5 for every thousand married women. In the following year it was 16.9. Lessons at what Americans call "The School of Hard Knocks" are costly, but they sure teach!

"Marriage in America: The State of Our Unions 2009" is the title of the Report published jointly at the Institute for American Values, University of Virginia, by the Center for Marriage and Families and the National Marriage Project, whose director, Brian Wilcox, wrote the Report. He says that millions of Americans have adopted a "homegrown bailout strategy," and "are relying on their own marriages and families to weather this storm." As our new-fangled world collapses, so the old proverbs come back into their own: "Every cloud has a silver lining"; "Blood is thick and water is thin"; "There's no place like home."

Another piece of evidence quoted by Wilcox to prove that the economic crisis is helping marriages is the decision of many married couples to get rid of credit card debt. As reported by the Federal Reserve Board, Americans have reduced their collective revolving debt by 90 billion over the past year. Wilcox says the recession has revived the "home economy" as more and more Americans are growing their own food, making and mending their own clothes, and dining out less often: "Many couples appear to be developing a new appreciation for the economic and social support that marriage can provide in tough times."

Husbands, behave like men, and turn to your wives for support.

Wives, glory in your womanly gifts which men do not have in anything like the same measure, and lean on your husbands for strength. A man without a woman is normally a zero (yes, zero!). A woman without a man is normally even less, an incomplete zero, or an open U. But put the U as support beneath the zero, and you suddenly have 8! On the Miraculous Medal, is not the Cross of Our Lord shown resting on the M of Mary? To go through with his Passion Our Lord chose to renounce all his divine Strength. But could his humanity alone have performed our Redemption without the human support of his Mother? Never!

Not many economists have any common sense, but the few that are not living in la-la-land all see this recession getting much worse yet. Mothers, re-learn domestic skills. Fathers, re-learn vegetable gardening. All lovers of truth and reality, strengthen not only family ties, but also neighbourhood ties. It is going to be a question of survival, and our governments and media are not going to help, on the contrary, unless they seriously change direction. "Our help is in the name of the Lord," figuring at this time of year as a powerless human baby. Yet this baby is the Almighty!

Kyrie eleison.