

Parenting Today – II

February 24, 2018

When parents read here last week the question whether they know what parenting today demands, it is to be hoped that they did not feel accused. They are under heavy pressure from the whole environment surrounding their children, and when souls are under pressure, God does not require of them to do the impossible, but only whatever they can do. Thus in the Letter to the second of the seven Churches of Asia, corresponding to the Church's Age of Martyrs (Apoc. II, 8–11), the Venerable Holzhauser explains that if the Catholics of Smyrna receive from the Holy Ghost no rebuke or reproach like five of the other seven Churches, it is because Catholics under persecution need encouragement and not criticism.

And God knows, parents striving to save their children's souls are under persecution, not yet bloody, but most powerful. For when men are, for instance, turning to AI (Artificial Intelligence) to make a robot into their god, then they are losing not only the true God, they are losing all notion of the difference between a machine and a human being, let alone the difference between man and woman or between parents and children. How can an environment trusting in AI for its future have any understanding or sympathy for the family as God designed it?

As one reader wrote to me, Eastern Communism treated brutally anybody not in line, but at least the enemy of salvation was recognisable, whereas what one might call Consumerism in East or West is rather more subtle – instead of brutalising, it merely marginalises, making true Catholics “abnormal,” while the children so want to be “normal,” with smart-phones like all the other children, etc. Consumerism glitters like its coloured lights, and so the children are being turned into mindless robots, clever enough when it comes to manipulating technology and the machines, but with no idea of the essential

human questions, because they are never taught to read, or to read between the lines as one did under Communism, and they are deprived of all tools of thinking. A generation of android puppets is growing all around us.

So, as opposed to what parents cannot do, what can they do to put their children on the path to Heaven (it will be the children's own free choice later if they stay there)? Firstly, a few basics. God exists and He wants to save all children, and to all of us He gives the help of His Mother and of invisible but powerful guardian angels who are on the side of all true parents. In the home, let these supernatural realities be part of everyday life, and let the everyday life be supernatural, even while parental common sense stops the children from being turned off by an artificial excess of religion.

Then on the natural level, give your children as much time as you see they need. Love is spelt T-I-M-E. Children to become human need to be formed by human beings, not by machines. And the natural formers of children are their parents, who have an enormous natural influence on their children, if only the parents will use it, instead of abdicating it. Set regular family meals around a table, and at the meals, talk. Chinese proverb: "Instruct your children at table, your wife on the pillow." Talk politics, especially the difference between reality and what the media present as reality. Warn the children to be careful outside the home, but tell them the truth about 9/11, and about The Monster Fib (between five and seven million). Yes, tell them about it as soon as they are capable of understanding (not before), so that they can realise what a world of lies God has given us to live in, as a just punishment for our apostasy. Always add in the religious dimension because it is always there, and the children need to understand that it is God that matters. But not just by piety – Our Lady of Fatima promotes both the Rosary and Russia's Consecration.

Then, more practically, get all possible electronics out of the house. Teach the children why you are not allowing television or smart-phones under your roof, and if you cannot do without the Internet, teach them why it is under physical (not just electronic) lock and key. And get their hands to work, boys on taking to pieces a motorbike, or carpentry, girls on sewing and cooking, all hands on the Rosary. And instead of television, try every night a family reading from Maria Valtorta's "Poem of the Man-God" (former title). Ridiculous? Try it. You may just find that the "Poem" is God's own answer to the television set!

Kyrie eleison.