

YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

In the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, One God. Amen.

Aim

- Identify the relationship between the child and other family members
- Educate the child about their duties and responsibilities at home
- Introduce the concept of a small church at home

Key verses

***“Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than him; Do not merely look out for your personal interests but for the interest of others”
(Philippians 2: 3-4)***

Lesson

Every marriage and family is a true gift from God; each one is special in its own unique way of loving and caring for one another. Our parents, our brothers and sisters are real blessings that God has granted us in order to be raised amongst people who truly care for us.

Our duties and responsibilities at home:

As members of a true Christian family we have certain duties that we need to accomplish at home. We have to share in all duties at home with other family members rather than delegating the task to mum or my sister or brother to do. Most of us have mothers who work and they spend long hours outside the house, hence out of love and compassion for her we all have to contribute to the house chores. There has to be system at home where the tasks are divided equally amongst the members so we don't feel burdened. As growing young ladies now there are many things that we can do to help at home these include:

- Tidying up our room
- Giving mum a hand in the kitchen
- Washing the dishes
- Vacuuming the carpet
- Helping with the washing
- Etc...

There is a wrong concept that boys or men in general shouldn't be contributing to house work. Since we are all members of the one family our brothers should be helping out as well as we are equal.

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Our relationship with our parents and other members:

Our relationship with our parents should be based on the first commandments. This relationship is furthered reinforced in **{Eph 6:1-3} Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honour your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), "that it may be well with you and that you may live long on the earth."**

We cannot possibly fulfil our desire to belong to the lord unless we are willing to obey our parents. We have to always respect them and be obedient to them in everything we do.

- Communicating with our parents in a respectful manner
- Listening to their advise in various matters
- Consulting our parents before we take decisions

Our greatest example about obedience is our lord Jesus Christ who in nature is God and equal to God but was obedient to the Father. He abased himself by becoming an obedient humble servant taking the nature of man following his father's will to the cross **"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross"(Philippians 2:5-8)**

- Respect and obedience is not only restricted to our parents but this should be paid to our brothers and sisters at home. Whether they are younger or older we have to treat them with respect and show love in all our actions.
- We need to be caring and compassionate to our brothers and sisters. If they are younger, we need to set good examples for them and guidance. We can help them in their studies and ensure they are doing the right thing.

Domains of family unity

• **Praying**

It is essential that we pray together and read the bible together at home as a means of binding spiritually so we can receive the blessings of the Holy Spirit and the power to overcome evil. When we pray together we experience the power of God's work with us as he said **"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am there in the midst of them "(Matthew 18:20)**

• **Taking Communion Together**

It is when the whole family is gathered around the body and blood of Jesus in the Eucharist that the church - as a community - is best expressed. This gathering is a feature of our Orthodox church, for not only does it bring the individual into a relationship with God but it also nurtures the relationship of the group with God: **"In the congregations I will bless the Lord" (Ps 26:12).**

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- **Bringing Problems Before God**

It is important to lift up our hearts to God when we face a problem. Besides the fact that this makes a way for God to intervene in our problems and make our hearts ready to cooperate gratefully, we find that this method builds up faith and fellowship so that we turn to God under all circumstances. **"Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me"** (Ps 50:15).

- **Mutual understanding:**

We need to understand that the family members may be going through phases of pressure or stress either at work or school. It is a great crime against the unity of the family and against oneself that a person puts his foot down and acts in self-centered individualism and stubbornness without consideration for others. We must learn to understand rather than being selfish.

Conclusion

Our take home message for today is that we need to appreciate God's blessing for granting us a loving and nurturing family and in order for to become functional members we have to contribute in various ways.

We also need to work upon strengthening our relationship with God as a family beside our personal relationship.

Glory is to God, forever. Amen.