

IDEAS 10

**International Online Teachers Society
Debate
Educational Materials For
Advance and Upper Intermediate
Students**



**International Online Teachers Society
Publishing Committee**



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THE 10TH INTERNATIONAL ONLINE TEACHERS SOCIETY ESSAY CONTEST

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FAMILY – A DIVINE INSTITUTION

Marian Baltazar
Class of 1980, University of the Philippines College of Manila
AB Political Science

Every individual has a family of its own. No matter who you are, all of us are borne to a family. I am sure that all of us perceive that the Divine Institutions apply to all of mankind, be it a believer or unbeliever for these are meant to stabilize all of human society. Family is one of the four Divine Institutions that God has set up, the rest of which are free will, marriage and nationalism. God gave these institutions for the entire human race and it is not only basic to civilization but particularly to the Christian civilization for that matter. According to Col. Theme, the family is the institution set up to raise and train the children as far as respect for authority, for the rights of others, for the privacy of others, to respect common law, to respect the property of others plus many other principles. As written in the book, "Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church", the Family is founded on marriage between a man and a woman, which is important both for natural reasons, as the principal place of interpersonal relationships and also for supernatural reasons, as a divine institution. It is therefore the superior educator and provider of "Godly values."

From the day an individual is born and has stepped into this world, he has become a part of a family. It is considered to be our first school where we learned love, care and family relationship. It is not only a place where we are cocooned in safety but an environment where a person is honed to be a matured individual. We are nurtured with all the love, care and understanding and are raised by our parents to be a God-fearing child. We are then molded into a sensible and virtuous person and the likes of which that we are now. Moreover, we create our perceptions, basis of actions and values in a family, thus, giving us an identity as a person.

A family is a special relationship between brothers and sisters, the love of children for their mother or father, the devotion of a mother for her child and the special relationship between a grandmother and grandfather and their grandchildren. The family contains the beautiful memories of our childhood to adulthood. Just as the earth goes through seasons, so does a family in the course of time endures seasons. It is also during times of crisis and hardships that families stay close together, to help each other out and endure what are sometimes the frigid winds of change. We undergo a lot of difficulties and changes. These phases of life are akin to the four seasons that we experience. Our life is full of seasons and transitions which are best experienced with the support of friends and most especially the family. As we live these momentous events in our life, particularly the trying times, we can call on our family members to come together and support one another.

Memories of our family and childhood are what shape our personality and who we are now. We take the traditions we grew up with us into adulthood. The family bond created will last forever and our family will always be our true home and the home against which all future homes will be judged. I guess you will agree with me that ... OUR FAMILY IS OUR HAVEN AGAINST ALL ODDS IN OUR LIFE.

Questions for discussion:

1. What is the real meaning of a family?
2. How can one say that the family as a divine institution play a very significant role in the society?
3. Can you describe in your own perception what a family is?
4. Does friction in relationships alter the way you conceive a family?
5. Can you identify what kind of a family do you belong to? Elaborate further.



THE IMPORTANCE OF A FAMILY

Marian Baltazar
Class of 1980, University of the Philippines College of Manila
AB Political Science

A person cannot do without a family for in this transient world that we live in; sometimes we get out of touch with the people who mean so much to us. This is where the family steps in, for it is an essential part of our whole being. We all belong to a family for we need all the loving comfort that it exudes to us. It is where a child is taught wisdom and the virtues in life. To each and every individual, the family is the cradle of life and love where one is born and grows to become a responsible person.

The family is the essential part of an individual's foundation for it is a vital unit which builds up a person's personality. How we behave and live the standard norms of the society and what we become in our life is very much dependent on one's family. The way our family members deal has a great impact on our personality. Looking at all these facts, one cannot deny the importance of the family because it is a crucial part of our life. It plays a major role in the development of a person. The goals we set in our life are dependent on what kind of life does our family have and the effect of which will help us decide as to what profession we would want as an adult.

The peace, love, happiness that an individual experience in a family is incomparable to anything in this world and not even money can buy. It is neither a cliché nor a taboo when we talk of the family per se. A family is where we are loved unconditionally and accepted the way we are, no matter what. It is where we experience comfort and an overwhelming joy of reason for our being. Our family gives us encouragement, understanding, teaches us how to have faith and hope in God and will not undermine what kind of person we are, for they will love us for who we are and how the Lord created us to be.

Families endure and they last forever. It goes on passing tradition from generation to generation. When we need a helping hand, a shoulder to cry on, a boost for our ego, someone to depend on for moral support, whom we can get mad at and still be loved anyways, who can we turn to? Who is there to share our joys, other milestones in our life and our sorrows and pain of heartaches, illness and even death? Who can be better than our families whom we can bank on because worst comes to worst and even extremes, our family will always be there for us through good times and bad times of our life.

As for me, I personally like being with my family for they are worth more than money can buy. They are like precious gems for me. If I were asked to live my life again, I would still choose to be with my family that God has bestowed upon me. The Lord has blessed me with a very nice, caring and loving family and I am sure that He did too for you, because God is our eternal Father in heaven where we will all be a part of just one family someday, somewhere our final destiny.

Questions for discussion:

- 1.What is the true essence of having a family of your own?
- 2.Can a person do without a family?
- 3.What makes the family a vital unit of society?
- 4.Can we consider the family infinite? Why?
- 5.How and in what ways can your family help you to become a better person as you are now?



THE FAMILY-AND THEN SOME

Kathlyn Q. Barrozo
Class of 1991, University of Santo Tomas
B.S. Medical Technology

A child's concept of family is a little more general right before he formally enters school. And then, he starts reading preschool material that teaches him to read: My Family. This is Father, This is Mother, This is Ramon/Brother, This is Nena/Sister, This is Baby. And then, further on, he reads: This is Tagpi/Bantay. Bow-wow-wow. At this point, he starts getting a clearer and more specific concept. "Aha, these people (and dog) I share the same roof with has a collective name: FAMILY." The definition of family has gradually evolved, contingent on factors that we have little or no control over. Where the family unit in less contemporary times was composed of the nuclear elements--a father and a mother plus their offspring--sociology textbooks now give another type of family where the members of a nuclear family are supplemented by others--grandparents, uncles, aunts, in-laws, cousins, to name just a few extra members of a typical extended family. Indeed, the concept of "family" has reached a whole new meaning.

It is not unusual nowadays to have more unorthodox families: This is Mother, This is Sister, This is Brother, This is Baby, This is Skype/Yahoo Messenger (where we often see and talk to my Father who's working abroad). The extra component is common in almost every family that has a family member working abroad to support the brood. Yes, life has become challenging enough to necessitate that the family gets thrown apart by circumstance, not by choice. And then, there are the really unconventional unions: This is Father, This is Father, This is Baby. With all due respect to same-gender unions, the family has become not just the basic husband-wife- partnership-with-kids concept, but something more unique. Such unions do not deserve criticism, no matter what those holier-than-thou naysayers say to the contrary. If I may say so myself, for as long as the child that such a partnership decides to raise is brought up to be responsible, God-fearing and of good character, then far be it for other people to start hurling sticks and stones.

Having a single parent-family is a bold step to take for any individual--for after all, didn't Hillary Clinton say that it takes a village to raise a child? Well, not entirely, no. If a person undertakes to raise a child in the best way possible, imbuing the child with the proper values and responsibly providing everything that any two-parent family can also provide, then, who needs an entire village? Besides, this writer does not think Ms. Clinton had actually meant that an entire village of people is literally required to raise a kid--how'd that many people fit into a house? (Ha-ha!)

In conclusion, the family is an integral part of society. It is therefore dependent upon those trying to raise that very unit to take that sacred, preordained duty to heart--to create an environment where every member is able to grow, develop, thrive into their fullest potential and be productive members of society.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. What are the two types of families described in the second paragraph? To which type does your family belong?
2. What are the common reasons why some family members need to find employment abroad? How do you feel about this fact?
3. What are your thoughts about same-gender/same-sex unions? Are they acceptable/legal in your country?
4. In your opinion, is it better to raise a child alone, without a spouse? Why?
5. What are the common problems that families of today face? Can those problems ever be addressed? How?



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