Protection, education, dignity, and Christian mission in a world that seems to have forgotten their value

We live in a paradoxical age. Never has there been so much talk about “children’s rights,” and yet rarely have children been so exposed to moral confusion, family breakdown, ideological manipulation in education, and spiritual abandonment.

They are protected physically, but often wounded in their souls.
Their entertainment is prioritized, but their formation is neglected.
They are given technology, but not always truth.
They are offered comfort, but not necessarily virtue.

And here arises a decisive question for every truly human society:

What does a child truly need?

The Christian answer is clear, profound, and revolutionary:

A child needs family, love, protection, education, and God.

It is not enough to feed or clothe them.
It is not enough to school them.
It is not enough to simply “let them be.”

A child needs to be formed integrally: body, intelligence, will, emotions, and soul.

Because every child is not merely a future adult.
He or she is already, right now, a person created in the image of God, with an eternal vocation.

I. The child: A gift from God, not a human

product

The Christian vision begins here:

Every child is wanted by God.

A child is not a biological accident.
Not a social burden.
Not an object of adult desire.
Not the property of his or her parents.

Each child is a unique, irreplaceable, immortal creature.

Every child's soul has been created directly by God with a supernatural destiny.

That is why Christ showed singular tenderness toward little ones:

"Let the little children come to Me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the Kingdom of Heaven" (Mt 19:14).

This phrase destroys every utilitarian vision of childhood.

A child's value does not come from productivity.
A child's value comes from who he or she is before God.

II. What should children find in their families?

1. Protection: A refuge in a wounded world

The family must be the first sanctuary.

A child needs physical safety, yes, but also:

- Emotional security
- Moral security

- Spiritual security

Parents are not merely providers.
They are guardians.

Today there are new threats:

- Early exposure to pornography
- Anti-Christian ideologies
- Hypersexualization
- The culture of relativism
- Unlimited technology

Therefore, protection no longer means only “keeping them warm.”

It means safeguarding innocence.

Innocence is not ignorance;
it is interior purity, capacity for truth, and openness to goodness.

To lose it prematurely is a form of violence.

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2. Care: Loving concretely and sacrificially

True familial love does not consist merely in feelings.

It consists in presence.

Children need:

- Time
- Listening
- Correction
- Tenderness
- Example

Many parents believe they love deeply because they work hard for their children.

But often, a child would trade toys for attention.

Emotional absence leaves deep wounds.

A child needs to know he or she is loved not because of achievements, but because of existence itself.

That is how God loves.

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3. Education: Forming the soul, not merely instructing the mind

Here lies one of the greatest modern crises.

Education is not merely teaching mathematics or languages.

To educate comes from *educere*: “to lead out,” to help bring forth the best within the soul.

To educate Christianly means teaching:

- To distinguish good from evil
- To master impulses
- To tell the truth
- To respect legitimate authority
- To pray
- To love God
- To serve others

Without this, there may be technical training, but not true education.

A society can produce brilliant professionals…
while at the same time morally shattered citizens.

III. Education: One of the most sublime missions of the human person

“To form well the soul of a young person is one of the most transcendent tasks a person can undertake.”

This is not an exaggeration.
It is a civilizational truth.

Whoever educates cooperates with God.

Parents participate in divine creative power not only by giving physical life, but by guiding that life toward its fullness.

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1. Education requires sacrifice

To truly be a father or mother is not merely biology:
it is a vocation of self-giving.

Educating means:

- Renouncing comfort
- Repeating corrections a thousand times
- Giving example even when difficult
- Sustaining discipline
- Fighting against harmful outside influences

Parental patience is a form of daily martyrdom.

But also of sanctification.

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2. Example educates more than speeches

Children listen…
but above all, they observe.

If a father speaks of prayer but never prays, he teaches hypocrisy.
If a mother speaks of purity but undermines dignity, she teaches contradiction.

Children learn love by seeing how their parents love one another.
They learn forgiveness by witnessing forgiveness.
They learn faith by seeing faith.

The first catechesis is not in the classroom.
It is at home.

IV. Children born outside marriage: Justice, responsibility, and redemption

We live in a culture that normalizes adult decisions without measuring their consequences for children.

Christian moral doctrine reminds us of something essential:

A child is never guilty of the circumstances of his or her conception.

Never.

That child’s dignity remains intact.

He or she must be loved, protected, and educated with full justice.

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1. The responsibility of parents

When a child has been conceived outside marriage, moral duty does not disappear:

- Economic responsibility
- Emotional presence
- Moral education
- The example of rectification

It is not enough to “acknowledge” the child; one must assume responsibility.

The sin of adults must not become abandonment for the child.

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2. Rectification also educates

If there has been error, the Christian response is not despair, but conversion.

Parents can teach even from fragility, by showing repentance, responsibility, and a desire for order.

Mercy does not deny truth:
The ideal remains that every child should grow up in a stable family founded on marriage.

Because the child has a right, in justice, to the greatest possible stability.

V. Has a marriage without children failed?

Here it is necessary to correct a superficial vision.

No.

Infertility does not annul marital dignity.

Marriage is not reduced to biology.

Its essence remains in:

- Faithful love
- Mutual self-giving
- Reciprocal sanctification
- Service

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1. The suffering of infertility

It can be a profound cross.
And it should be treated with compassion, never cruel judgment.

But the cross can also become spiritual fruitfulness.

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2. Other forms of fruitfulness

Many childless marriages become:

- Adoptive parents
- Educators
- Protectors
- Catechists
- Benefactors

The history of the Church is full of marriages whose fruitfulness surpassed blood.

For to generate bodies is immense.
But so too is helping save souls.

VI. The modern war against childhood

Today many attacks against children do not appear to be attacks.

They are presented as progress.

But discernment is necessary:

When a child is deprived of:

- Innocence
- Father or mother without grave cause
- Natural identity
- Moral formation
- The right to God

…deep harm is done to that child’s development.

A society that confuses its children compromises its future.

VII. The Holy Family: The perfect model

Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

In Nazareth we find the paradigm:

Jesus:

Filial obedience.

Mary:

Tenderness, purity, self-giving.

Joseph:

Protection, labor, silent authority.

Every Christian family should contemplate this home.

It was not wealthy.
It was not powerful.
But it was holy.

And holiness remains the greatest gift parents can offer.

VIII. Practical advice for forming Christian children today

1. Pray with them every day

Even briefly.

2. Bless them

Parental blessing has spiritual power.

3. Limit screens

Not all content forms well.

4. Teach sacrifice

Do not give everything immediately.

5. Take them to Mass

Not as empty obligation, but as encounter with God.

6. Correct with firmness and love

Discipline without love destroys; love without discipline spoils.

7. Show coherence

Faith is transmitted more by witness than by imposition.

IX. A civilization stakes its future on its children

Every generation decides whether it will hand its children:

Either:

Consumerism, relativism, and emptiness.

Or:

Truth, virtue, and eternity.

Today's children will be:

- Tomorrow's parents
- Tomorrow's priests
- Tomorrow's leaders
- Tomorrow's saints or tomorrow's lost souls

That is why educating them well is not merely a private task.

It is a work of civilization.

Conclusion: Whoever welcomes, forms, and loves a child touches the heart of Christ

Christ said it with eternal solemnity:

“Whatever you did for one of these little ones, you did for Me” (cf. Mt 25:40).

Every diaper changed with love,
every sleepless night,
every patient correction,
every rosary taught,
every silent sacrifice…

Has supernatural value.

Because raising a child is not simply preparing someone for life.

It is preparing a soul for eternity.

In a world that often confuses freedom with abandonment,

the Christian family is called to remember this truth:

Children are not an accessory of society.
They are its most sacred treasure.