



Newsletter – March 2019

CFSM Singapore
2 Highland Road, #03-12
Singapore 549102

Website: <http://www.cfsm.org.sg>

JOY OF THE MARRIAGE IS JOY OF THE CHURCH

There were many lawyers in the court room. The senior lawyers were mentioning their cases before the High Court judge. All these lawyers were holding files indicating that that day was scheduled for the hearing of uncontested divorces. As a junior lawyer, I observed the proceeding intently and waited for my turn.

Yes. Uncontested divorces. One spouse petitions for divorce and the other spouse agrees to the divorce without a fight. Most of the divorces in Singapore are uncontested. There are various reasons why this form of divorce is popular. For some parties, the proceeding can be emotionally traumatic while for others it is just clean happy break. Divorces can occur in the early years of marriage or after some years of married life. In the mid- 1980s, I had acted for a Dutch client who was married for more than 30 years. He got a clean break within 10 minutes. His children were all grown up and on their own. There were no other issues pertaining to the divorce.

At present family matters including divorces are heard in the newly set up Family Court. Spouses have to attend mediation or counselling sessions. They have to draw up plans for their children and/or matrimonial property, if they have any, to facilitate a quick settlement of the disputes between the spouses. However, some divorces are bitterly fought out and sometimes on every issue. Sometimes, there is domestic violence and spousal abuse. In Singapore, the authorities are always tightening the law to ensure the peaceful resolution of family disputes and encourage every family to live in harmony recognizing and discharging their duties diligently. In many families the support for dual income is necessary to have a healthy flow of finance for the family. So it is even more challenging to work and support the family on a single income. Many hard and difficult decisions have to be made for the good of the children and family. Hence the husband and the wife will become the key house manager of the family with many social responsibilities.

Greater challenges arise when a married couple begets children. Although the Catholic Church encourages a Christian couple to have more children, each couple must think twice before they have another child in the present day. Next, they have to ensure that each child is brought up in the Catholic faith with the right education

and values. Their education should also ensure that they are employable in the job market.

Having been married for 26 years, I realized that honesty, patience, faithfulness and trust are vital in marriage. In addition, sharing household duties and caring for the family will sustain a happy family life. One can be sure that in the Holy Family, Mary and Joseph had all these values.

Father Leo J Trese said in his book "The Faith Explained" (3rd Edition at page 515) the following:

"It seems to me that it should be a wonderfully inspiring thought to a Christian husband and wife to realize that Jesus was thinking of them as he suffered his passion; to realize that one of the things for which Christ died was the graces they would need in marriage. Equally inspiring should be the knowledge that the Holy Spirit inspired St Paul to compare marriage to the fruitful, grace-filled union and interchange between Christ and his Spouse, the Church".

Pope Francis also said as follows:

"Every family should look to the icon of the Holy Family of Nazareth. Its daily life had its share of burdens and even nightmares, as when they met with Herod's implacable violence. This last was an experience that, sad to say, continues to afflict the many refugee families who in our day feel rejected and helpless. Like the Magi, our families are invited to contemplate the Child and his Mother, to bow down and worship him (cf. Mt 2:11). Like Mary, they are asked to face their family's challenges with courage and serenity, in good times and bad, and to keep in their heart the great things which God has done (cf. Lk 2:19, 51). The treasury of Mary's heart also contains the experiences of every family, which she cherishes. For this reason, she can help us understand the meaning of these experiences and to hear the message God wishes to communicate through the life of our families." (AMORIS LAETITIA, paragraph 30).

See-Our Situation

- a. Is the above situation, trend of separation and divorces common in Singapore?
- b. Why does such situation happen after getting married?
- c. What would be consequences and impact within the family, Church and Society if the above percentage continues?

Reflection-Personal Reflection

- a. What is my inner feeling and thoughts about the above reality?
- b. What do I learn from the above situation?

Reflection-Christian Reflection

- a. What does the teaching of the Church, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the Sacrament of Marriage and the Marriage Vows tell us?
- b. If Christ is present among us what would be his response and message for all of us?

Our Action

- a. What can I/we do to prevent such happening within the community where we are?

CFSM NOTICE

CFSM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Date: 10 March 2019

Time: 2.30pm to 4.30pm

Venue: Church of St Anne, 66 Sengkang East Way Singapore 548593

By Bus: 50, 82, 88, 119, 136, 161, 163

MRT: Sengkang Station

All members are encouraged to attend the AGM.