

The Christian Family and Social Movement

CFSM

Singapore

2 Highland Road,

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My M-I-L says.....

My Mother-in-Law told me....

“We are women. We are inferior. When we are young we must obey and serve our fathers. When we are married we obey and serve our husbands. When we have sons we obey and serve our sons. This is the Chinese way. This is the Asian way.”

My MIL says....

“Girls are not counted. Married out, belong to other people.

If you want to have a second child make sure you give birth to a boy. Modern science can find out first and if it is a girl you can make it drop (abort it)”.

My MIL says....

“When I was married into your father-in-law’s family I was bullied. I have to do all the house work, serve his parents, his brothers, his sisters, and give birth to children. Now I am a mother in law, you merrily go out and work, and I do not have a daughter in law to bully. It is just not fair. I expect you to at least help on weekends, or when you are on leave.”

My faith teaches me otherwise.

“...So God created human beings, making them to be like himself. He created them male and female, blessed them and said Have many children.....” (Genesis)

Both man and woman are human beings to an equal degree, both are created in God’s image. No ifs or buts. The Church is definite about the equality.

Pope John Paul II acknowledged that women had had a raw deal in the past. He wrote...

“women’s dignity has often been unacknowledged and their prerogatives misrepresented; they have often been relegated to the margins of society and even reduced to servitude. This has prevented women from truly being themselves and it has resulted in a spiritual impoverishment of humanity.

“When it comes to setting women free from every kind of exploitation and domination, the Gospel contains an ever relevant message which goes back to the *attitude of Jesus Christ himself.*

Transcending the established norms of his own culture, Jesus treated women with openness, respect, acceptance and tenderness.

“Necessary emphasis should be placed on the *genius of women*, not only by considering great and famous women of the past or present, but also those *ordinary* women who revealed the gift of their womanhood by placing themselves at the service of other in their everyday lives. For in giving themselves to others each day women fulfill their deepest vocation. Perhaps more than men, women *acknowledge the person*, because they see persons with their hearts.”

The Encyclical, - “Christian Family in the Modern World” observes....

Unfortunately the Christian message about the dignity of women is contradicted by that persistent mentality which considers the human being not as a person but as a thing, as an object of trade, at the service of selfish interests and mere pleasure; the first victims of this mentality are women.

My MIL says....

“If you die, my son can find another wife. If I die my son cannot find another mother. If he divorces you he can remarry. If he kicks me out of his life he cannot be reborn. He will always be my son, but, he can, tomorrow be someone else’s husband.”

My MIL says....

“You were not my choice to marry my son, therefore you stole my son from me. I will never forget this. You too must remember, I did not choose you. My son chose you, He was young then, He was hasty.”

My MIL says....

“He is our only son. By right he cannot leave his parents. He must not move out with his wife and live separately from us. Now I accept that he did so, he is still bound in duty to contribute to the upkeep of our house and family.”

My faith teaches me otherwise....

Paul in his Epistles teaches...

As the scripture says, - For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and unite with his wife, and the two shall become one. Submit yourselves to one another because of your reverence for Christ.

Men ought to love their wives just as they love their own bodies. A man who loves his wife loves himself...

In Galatians 3.28 Paul acknowledges the fundamental equality between man and woman.

Eph 5.21-24 must not be taken out of context. The next sentence, 5.25 demands that man not only love his wife but must be ready to give his life (everything) for her. When Paul says that Man is to his wife what Christ is to the church, he wishes and recommends the founding of a similar relationship of mutual love

“You are not her master” writes St Ambrose, “but her husband; she is not given to you to be your slave, but your wife... Reciprocate her attentiveness to you and be grateful to her for her love”. With his wife a man should live “a very special form of personal friendship” Love for his wife as the mother of their children and love for the children themselves are for the man the natural way of understanding and fulfilling his fatherhood.

In the Encyclical “Christian Family in the Modern World”, the Church teaches...

Family communion can only be preserved through a great spirit of sacrifice. It requires, in fact, a ready and generous openness of each and all to understanding, to forbearance, to pardon, to reconciliation. There is no family that does not know how selfishness, discord, tension and conflict violently attack and at times mortally wounds its own communion

Above all where social and cultural conditions (like those so claimed Chinese customs – as interpreted by my MIL) so easily encourage a father to be less involved in the work of education, efforts must be made to restore socially the conviction that the place and task of the father in and for the family is of unique and irreplaceable importance. As experience teaches, the absence of a father causes psychological and moral imbalance and notable difficulties in family relationships, as does, in contrary circumstances, the oppressive presence of a father, especially where there still prevail the phenomenon of “machismo”, or a wrong superiority of male prerogatives which humiliates women and inhibits the development of healthy family relationships.

My MIL is not a fictitious person.
She is real, flesh and blood.

Help!!!.

article by... a Chinese mother of 6 children
with reflections by..... Fr. A. Christophe..

CFSM DAY

The CFSM day this year is on Sunday 11th November.

In our usual venue - The Novena Church’s premises in Thomson Road.

Program starts from 1.30pm

Look out for details in your mail or from your group leaders.