

HEALTH AND FAMILY

INTRODUCTION

The East always has been the cradle of the wisdom. We have a lot to learn from those people of millenary culture that were living deep ideals. Inside the eastern culture calls me to attention the accent in the serenity, in the benevolence, in the complementation, in the equilibrium; in a word, in the harmony.

This popular experience that with take patience reflection, estimation and constancy, that goes beyond the sensible world and arrives to contemplation express itself in diverse religions and philosophic thoughts, that try solve the problems of the one and the multiple, the appearance and the truth, the transitory and the eternal, the action and the contemplation. On arrives to different expressions and formulations that express salvation positions such as extinction of the passion as egoistic anxiety, the equilibrium between forces of contrary sign between opposite elements that in so old expressions as Taoism have the personification for instance in “Yin” and “Yang”, the male and female elements; to return finally to the “Tao” origin and goal of all.

When we formulate the ideal of health we are not far from this thought and the harmony is its basic element. If after we speak of the family health, we proceed in the same direction.

For us Christians, this is the right direction. We think that it is the transparency of God in the man. God is harmony and so is also the life. The original intuition of the eastern culture is completed by the Christendom from a double way: receiving the Revelation as a gift from God that says to us that God in His intimacy is a fecund harmony; and knowing that He gives us the force to reproduce this harmony in the creation, specially in the man.

When on consider the subject of health and family, this is the way I intend to follow with those reflections: how God is harmony, and how the health in the family consists in this divine harmony. Furthermore,

how God is the family harmony and how in this harmony consists the true health of the family.

I. God, Fecund Familial Harmony

“Our God in his most inner mystery is not a solitude, but a family, because He carries in Himself the Parenthood, the Sonship, and the essence of the family, which is Love”

John Paul II (Homily, 28, I, 79; Puebla, México).

1. The life in the Trinity

In fact, the Father thinks Himself, and His thought is his personal infinite transparency that consists in His Word, the Son of God. In Him was poured, as we may say, all that the Father is, except to be Father, Beginning; and this poured Himself and contains Himself in the infinite uncontainable is the Son of God. Constitutes the true generation that coexists in the same eternity of the Father. And this infinite fecund donation is the infinite love of God Father to God Son, and of God Son to God Father, that is the infinite Love that constitutes the Holy Spirit in the loving and full equality with the Father and the Son.

This is our God: One only God in the infinite mystery of three equal persons infinite distinct. Here is the base of all life: The intelligent force that loves. This intelligent force that loves inscribes Himself in the infinite page of the divine nature. This donation is infinitely fecund because is infinitely intelligent and infinitely lovely. This donation originates an infinite integration because has as result not three gods, something impossible because would be contradictory three infinities, but only one God that subsists in three personal relations that are to think, to be thought, and to be loved and constitute the three divine persons. So God in His intimacy is not a solitude, but a family.

2. Communication of the divine life in the Creation.

Those divine operations are not related to a sector of the original reality, but to the totality. God is the total original reality. When comes the existence of that is not God, it will be possible only because a free

voluntary participation of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, that communicates all the energy that constitutes the Creation.. Only by a free love God communicates His force, his thought and his love, limiting this participation according his will, and the measure of the donation He would will to give.

And this vital process is the norm for all vital expansion. So God creates the participate life according this infinite model. This participation is growing up according the give degree, and arrives to its maxim expression in the personal creatures: we speak now of the men in which the reproduction of the model is such that converts itself in the same image of God. This image is make when the received force to exist becomes intelligence and force, synthesizing, lovely donation. So God creates the freedom that goes together with the Love. When God creates the Freedom, creates the History. The History is the free developing of the created love, in which the man is the actor, without to obstacles that saving his freedom, God Self be the conductor of the History.

In the History the man changes the love in hate and try so to destroy the same life, that is precisely love of donation. This hate comes so to death, till God Father Himself, by His Son, touches with infinite love in the Holy Spirit this death. And in a new creation reaffirm his lovely donation as source of life for the man. And in the Incarnation of his Son, in his life, passion and death, delivers the strength of the resurrection, enlightened Him as the only Truth, and the Spirit as the unique real love that can exist and redirect with immense force the man to his true and to his love, in such way that never can imagine: making him adoptive son of God.

In the center of all is the life. The life that always is donation, and that as donation and only as lovely donation is really everlasting life, not ephemera, but that following the route of his model God, project itself to the eternities without end.

II. The health in the family as divine and fecund harmony

When we treat of the family that is the cradle of the life, this is properly the model. The family is the authentic address of the life. Any other point that today can use to produce the life is fictitious and

deformed. The life is only authentic when is full donation of love, and the authentic fertility only consists in the force and the intelligence unite with the love in a full donation. This is the reason why the family only has its origin in the exclusive and total donation of the man and woman, because the fecund love asks all without rests, and so is build the marriage, unique and insoluble. The father, the mother and the son transparent the Trinitarian ideal. So as God is. The father and the mother deliver themselves in a compete and lovely knowledge, so as God Father delivers Himself to His Son through this complete and lovely knowledge, and proceeds from Them the fruit of the love that is the Holy Spirit. So from the gift of the father to the mother and of the mother to the father proceeds the lovely fruit that is the son. This is a gift that many times is very difficult and painful, because so is the gift of God that with takes the cross of Christ. But finally on find always the triumph and the victory, the glorious resurrection of the Lord, the greatest force that vivify the universe, the unique and true happiness that last forever.

The health identify itself with the life. So the health of the family must be the full develop of this donation of love. For this vital donation God is plenty harmony. So the health consists in going toward the lovely image full of harmony that is God One and Trine. The unity in God that realize the Holy Spirit is precisely the unity of love, the divine communion. In the family, in the measure that is realized this donation, this unity, this harmony, in the self measure we can speak of a healthy family, of a family that has the health.

The human health consists so in the research of harmony, or if we will, in the dynamic tension toward the harmony of a unlimited life, owning in perfect fullness. The way toward harmony is the way toward health. It takes with itself steps that are the steps of the age of the man, of the age of the family, and in the measure that on realize the harmony, in this measure this step is healthy or not.

So we can say with the Pope John Paul II that the health is the dynamic tension toward the physical, psychical, social and spiritual, and not only the absence of illness. This tension is different according the ages and must be conformed according the distinct mission that God commend everyone, every families.

1. Physical Health

The tension towards physical harmony in the family, with take indeed the fight against the sickness, and find the physical health for every family. The first them that present this section is the so called “reproductive health”.

Officially “reproductive health” means without covered euphemisms, to annihilate the human reproduction, specially among the poor peoples in the World. It means so the abortion and antenatal practices. It is clear that from this conception it is not matter of health but death, directed to the destruction of the origin self of the family . Considering the health as harmony, this is the major disharmony to the family, closed in a egoistic sterility.

The true reproductive health must be a fecund donation, the self fecundity of the life, this must regulate itself by harmony that is expressed in the virtue of chastity. The chastity is not directly to the abstinence of the reproductive function, but to its regulation in order to get a health human reproduction. This is the meaning of the responsible motherhood and parenthood. In this context must be understood the authentic meaning of the sexuality, That is the sensible expression of the fecundity that proceeds of a full lovely donation.

In the actual society, specially through the mass media, the authentic reproductive health is oppugned for the tergiversation of the meaning of the sexuality. The sex and the sexuality are proposed as only a egoistic source of pleasure, the most of the time without connection with fecundity. The fecundity is presented some times as one right and not as a gift from God. God is Who gives the new human life, as He is the creator of the individual soul of everyone.

From the perspective of the sexuality as authentic and unique expression of the full, fecund and lovely donation, that only has effect in the matrimonial union, unique and indissoluble, between a man and a woman, appear the illegitimacy ob the biogenetic experiments such as FIVET and the human clonation, the production of embryos for the use and investigation of stem cells, and every manipulation of

the human genome that includes its destruction or disproportionate damage.

From a correct interpretation and education of the sexuality, the family will be the key to avoid the STI that are so common today. Specially we talk about AIDS, that if it is true it is transmitted also by blood and from the mother to her son, but the most frequent transmission is by the indebt use of the sex.

This fecund donation of the physical health will mean all the branch of the prevention and healing of the illness; all the hygienic education that is learned from the family.

2. Mental health

The mental health refers to the interne harmony of the person, in a transparent perception of that the person is and pretend to be. It is a conscience of himself that includes the auto dominion, that means know how to go in the way to the total harmony.

It means the harmony of thinking and willing, the mental lucidity and the capacity to find the goodness and go to it. The mental health takes with itself to understand and execute the freedom as a attribute of the will. It means the transparency of all the sentiments through the reason and its guidance by the will. It means the intellectual, willing and sentimental harmony. The mental health takes with itself the full affective developing enlightened by the intellect and conducted by the will. When a family is mental sane we have a family in which the emotion of the mutual fecund donation is the strength that sustains it of the most intelligent and decided way.

3. Social Health

The social health means the harmony with each other. The social health of the family means the harmony of this family with the others. It is the instauration of complementary relations between all. The beginning of the socialization is made into the family and from it with the others, according to the social sphere. The norm of the vital relation is always the donation. The donation goes away from the selfishness and project itself toward the others in order to

complement and be complemented. Without a family internally harmonic it is impossible to build the social health; it is impossible to build a true society. In this sense the family is the core from that starts the society, and is its first cellule of growing. The family is prior to society, and a society that destroys the family is a society that destroys itself.

Alas, in the actual society on find very heavy attacks that pretend destroy the family and therefore are suicide even against the same society that perpetrate them. One of those attacks very clear is the so called "gender culture". According this culture there are not distinction between the human genders because is eliminated the fecundity as essential element of them. Even in the case of accepting the human mutual lovely donation, on substrate essentially the fecundity as such or as capacity. On use to say that the fatherhood and motherhood are merely "cultural". That means that they are not constitutive of the gender as such, but are invention of a old fashioned machismo that since today has discriminated the woman considering her as mother. Destroying the familiar social harmony as lovely and fecund donation on accept under the concept of family any connivance, heterosexual or homosexual, with or without permanence, with or without indissolubility, so as define the family simply those that are living under the same roof. This is the suicide fashion as today on are attacking against the familiar and social health and existence. The Pope many times has qualified it ad the death culture.

4. Spiritual Health

The spiritual health of the family is the top of the harmony. It consists in that we can denominate the family project. All comes unite from a finality that accept and share all the members of the family. All dispersion is eliminated. According the consistency of the project becomes qualified the spiritual harmony of the family. There are immediate, mediate, and definitive projects. The mutual and fecund donation becomes concrete in the different ways of the life, and in the intention to arrive to this or this goal and finality. This harmony is where better is manifested the image of God as the intelligent force of fecund love that constitutes the life.

The spiritual health of the western post modern society is heavily attacked when according to some opinions the man is a moral stranger, that walks toward unknown destiny. Without horizon, compass or goal. This spiritual illness is so heavy that is the cause why in diverse countries the depression is the mayor font of deaths.

The spiritual harmony means in the reality not only some plan of the life, because it often exists, and many families project themselves toward horizons always improving. The spiritual health of the family consists in the capacity to listen. Listen and consent to be carried. Listen the wise almightiness of the Love that is God, One and Trine. And accept the plan that He determines. This is the individual and familiar vocation that one must follow. But not only is to know listen, but open himself to the divine call and consent to be carried by the great force of the Love that is the Holy Spirit. It is not matter of a unproductive passivism, but of the divine human synergy. All the great familiar capacity together with the wise almightiness of the Love, that lead us to unexpected horizons.

This is the spiritual health of the family. Not only a fair theory, but the whole force of an embrace of divine and human love, in the individual, familiar and social spheres. This is the true tension toward the harmony, this is the true family health.

CONCLUSION

We try to consider the health of the family from the point of the harmony. Not only to adequate our reflections to the eastern culture, but because really in the deepest of the life of God according to our Catholic faith, we find the harmony as essential.

To understand the very proper health of the family, it is impossible without faith, you saw how we depart from the life in the Holy Trinity. Only with a profound faith it is possible to build a conception of the health of the family as image of the Holy Trinity. Specially when we considered the psychical health and we speak of the own transparency, this dominion is also impossible without faith.

When we speak of the spiritual health as a project that means go toward a goal and that this goal is not different as the resurrection of

Christ and so our own resurrection, it is also impossible to proceed in this way without the virtue of the hope.

And when we speak of the health as lovely fecund donation, it is impossible to understand this donation in God and in the family without the plenty of love that is the virtue of the charity. It also appears when specially we speak of the social health as donation to others into and outside the family.

So we close those considerations concluding that the very essence of the family health is the virtue; the theological virtues certainly, but also the cardinal virtues. Only with the exercise of the virtues it is possible to go toward the divine harmony in that consist the very reality of health.

Tank you for your attention.

Vatican City, November 28, 2005.

*+ Javier Cardinal Lozano
Barragán.
President of the Pontifical
Council
For Pastoral Health Care.*