

A FAMILY APOSTOLATE

by JOHN M. HAFFERT



There are many "single" persons who are apostles of the Message of Fatima. But for the most part it is a family apostolate!

"Basic"

The family is the basic, the first "Blue Army cell," with the children responding to the Message of Fatima under the loving direction of parents *even as the children of Fatima responded under the loving direction of the Mother of us all.*

First "Public" Appearance

And THE HOLY FAMILY APPEARED AT FATIMA *for the first time in history.*

It may be that the Holy Family has appeared to various saints at various times. But the only appearance of the Holy Family in a "public" appearance (i.e., in an apparition approved by the Church and having a public message *for the entire Church*) was at Fatima.

Is it not of great significance that the appearance of the Holy Family at Fatima in 1917 took place at the very moment that the great miracle began... the miracle which Our Lady foretold that God would perform "so that everyone may believe"?

Importance of Family Holiness

This fact underlines what Pope John Paul II had declared to be the primary message of his pontificate: *The importance of the family*, and of the sanctity of the family.

The Fatima Message is one of holiness...and not of isolated holi-

ness but essentially of *sanctification of daily duty*. This involves primarily our relationship to others whom we are commanded to love as ourselves.

Do parents realize that their *primary* obligation is the *sanctification* of their children? Do children realize that the authority of their parents to them personifies the authority of God?

Fostered Family Unity

In the November-December issue there was an article on the importance of family participation in the celebration of Christmas in Portugal. The author noted that within the family unit, children are treasured and loved and that the common family devotions foster greater unity among parents and children, between relatives and between brothers and sisters.

Example of Nazareth

The major example God has set before us in the mystery of the Incarnation and Redemption is the example of the FAMILY... the example of Nazareth (where Jesus spent thirty years).

Certain to Grow...

The Blue Army holds forth the *Family Rosary* as the most important "sanctifier" of the family after the Sacraments, and the *Scapular* as the special symbol of spiritual unity of the family... not by earthly family relationship, but as united under the mantle of Mary in a *heavenly-family* relationship.

Thus united and strengthened and inspired... the family is certain to grow in holiness.

To Help Parents Too!

The Blue Army Cadet Program is not only for the youth... but to aid the parents in their own instruction of youth and in fulfillment of their basic obligation to raise their children in holiness.

All... ONE Family...

To accent this mood, the Blue Army erected a replica of the *Holy House of Nazareth* at its National Center, in Washington, N.J., with *actual stone* from the original Holy House... stone which echoed for thirty years to the voice of Jesus speaking to Our Lady and to St. Joseph... stone which was touched by their hands and which witnessed their family life. Daily Mass and devotions in this Holy House, U.S.A. rebound to the benefit of all Blue Army members and families throughout the nation... making us, in the end... all ONE FAMILY under the mantle of Mary, symbolized by our great Shrine at the National Center to the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Washington, N.J.

*The Holy Family
Appeared at
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the first time...*