

BEC Reflection

HOPE BELIEVE, LIVE and GIVE

TOGETHERNESS *in Good Times and Bad*

EVENT: **International Day of Families**

SOCIAL MEDIA TREND: **#theyainthevay**

INTRODUCTION:

The United Nations General Assembly declared 15 May as "International Family Day" in 1993. This special day was first celebrated on 15 May 1994. It is observed to honor the importance of families. Families are the foundation of society. Our most formative years are spent with our families who are likely to be the most important people in our lives. Therefore, they should be celebrated. Let us spend time this month to find ways to protect and celebrate the family unit in our society by starting at home with our own.

(From: United Nations Message for Day of Families – May 15 2012)



CLOSING PRAYER:

Invite another BEC member to say the concluding the prayer.

We pray today for all families which feel overburdened; those who are not able to cope with the pressures and demands of daily life, those who are troubled and who feel there is no hope. Lord, be with them, comfort and soothe their minds, hearts and spirits. Give them hope, peace and rest. Help them to remain faithful as a family. Amen

CLOSING HYMN:

Hail, Holy Queen Enthroned Above

Hail, holy Queen enthroned above, O Maria.
Hail, Queen of mercy and of love, O Maria.
Triumph, all ye cherubim,
Sing with us, ye seraphim,
Heaven and earth resound the hymn:
Salve, salve, salve, Regina!

The cause of joy to us below, O Maria.
The spring through which all graces flow, O Maria.
Angels, all your praises bring,
Earth and heaven, with us sing,
All creation echoing:
Salve, salve, salve, Regina!

OPENING PRAYER

Invite a BEC member to lead in prayer.

Heavenly Father, as we remember the “International Family Day”, grant that all families may become for each other a true source of life and love. Grant that Your grace may guide the thoughts and actions of those who are called to married life and parenthood, so that they may work for the good of their families and all families in the world.

OPENING HYMN:

In God's Family

We are happy Christians all united in the Lord.
We belong to one Family.
Jesus Christ has chosen us to carry on His life,
over every land and sea.
From the north and from the south,
and from the east and west,
He has called us all together.

Chorus:

***And we are delighted, that we united,
into God's own family.***

***And we are delighted, that we united,
into God's own family.***

Now as Christians
we must try to live the Gospel life.
Living in simplicity.
We will share the goods
we have with everyone in need,
such is Christ-like charity.
We are grateful that God called us
to this way of life.
In the footsteps of our Saviour. **(C)**

DIALOGUE

Thomas and Eli, who have been married for over eight decades are presently living in Kerala, India. They got married in 1932, making them perhaps the longest married couple in India after 83 years of marriage. According to them, there are two words to a successful married life - love and tolerance. Parents to eight children, the couple, also have 18 grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren. They celebrated their 83rd wedding anniversary on 31 January, 2015 in their hometown, Thodupuzha, in Idukki district.

Born into a family which lived in a small rural village where agriculture was the source of income, Thomas according to the custom of those days married at the age of 18. Eli, who was also born in the same district, was only 15 years old at the time of the wedding. During their first meeting, that is, their engagement ceremony, when Thomas laid eyes on his wife Eli, it was one of the happiest moments in his life. Their marriage ceremony was a simple function. The first photograph that they have of themselves is after they had become parents to four children.

Not all was easy for the couple. Every marriage has its ups and downs, and so it was for them too. The couple in their married life have suffered as much as they have celebrated. Not only did they lose their first child, but their poor financial situation made life even more difficult. It was a real struggle but they braved it together. “We both were hard working and now we are happy”, Thomas says. But when asked if he was ever bored at any point in the relationship, he was surprised. ‘How do you get bored? Never at any point in time I did feel so’. One of their sons, James, also agrees that the couple are a perfect match and are also great parents.

(Source: The News Minute, January 26, 2015)



Share your thoughts with your BEC members.

- What do you think of the secret to a happy and successful married life?
- What are some of the major challenges that families face today?
- What are ways families can remain united in good and bad times?

DISCERNMENT

Gal 6: 2–5

Source: Jerusalem Bible

Carry each other's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ. If anyone thinks he is something, when in fact he is nothing, he deceives himself. Let each one examine his own conduct and he shall not boast before others, but will be zealous for his own progress. Everyone will answer for his own deeds.

REFLECTION:

- READ the text aloud and LISTEN with openness.
- READ it silently by yourself until a word or phrase touches or strikes you.
- What is the Holy Spirit saying to you through the word or phrase?
- What do you say to the Lord in response to his Word?
- Share in small groups (3-4 persons) the verse that has touched you.

DEEDS:

Our task for this month will be to:

- For married couples: Write a letter to your spouse, thanking him/ her for his/her love, patience and understanding for you in good and bad times.
- For parents: Write a short letter to each child, thanking him/ her for being part of the family and for being there for each other in good and bad times.
- For children: Write a letter to your parent/s, thanking them for their love and sacrifice, and for their guidance in good and bad times.