

## **Handicaps, Children, Family, Matrimony, and Vocation**

Parents who have handicapped children or children who present particular problems of behaviour or other challenges are inclined to worry excessively about them and to feel overly responsible for them.

Dear parents don't worry so much about what a child doesn't have or do, and focus on what your child has and does. For one thing, he or she is a beloved creature and also a child of God and in addition, by Baptism now participates in the life of the Blessed Trinity. If you watch carefully, you, your spouse, and your other children may be able to observe through your handicapped child's innocence the joy that he or she transparently exudes that comes into them from the Blessed Trinity by the Holy Spirit.

You can enhance their experience and openness to God by repeating regularly each day little simple rituals or acts of prayer, adoration, openness, and gratitude to God the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, and over time help them become familiar with our and their Blessed Mother Mary.

They are already caring for your child.

No matter the unique benefits and deficits of each unique child, they are both a burden and blessing to their parents. It is their way of doing their part in the family to help their parents accomplish their vocation and work out their salvation through labors of love and patient endurance of suffering for the sake of love.

It may seem to the parents and it may actually be so that a handicapped child is not able to learn much as we understand learning. Don't underestimate such a child.... We aren't only mind or intellect, but also psyche and emotions, and also heart and love, and also soul and spirit. When I suggest parents introduce their handicapped child to the Blessed Trinity and to Mary, I mean that they include their child as they should each of their children when they at times pray out loud to God and chat with Mary, as when they pray and ponder the mysteries of the Rosary.... and ask THEM to include this child and to help him or her.

It can be as simple as that. Living our faith in the child's presence, whether he seems to pay attention to what we're doing or not, so that in our mind, heart, and soul at least, we include the child in our visits with God and the saints and open the door to what they are already doing for each child and in them.

In the end, our faith can give us eyes to see each child, no matter what deficits they may be experiencing early or late in life, as God sees them, and to trust in the Divine Mercy of God to do for them all that God our Father wants for them that we cannot give them due to our personal limitations, poverty, or sinfulness.

Peace be with you and your loved ones!