

## Fathers & Sundays

### What is purpose of Sunday?

- Starting Point
  - We are meant to sanctify the day by consecrating it to God.
- What is the relevant context for us?
  - We live in a time of apostasy from God, as St Pius X mentioned.
  - To fight modern apostasy is put God in His right place in the world and in the home. We begin this with Sunday, the day that belongs above all to Him. This is what is meant by “sanctifying the day”
- Thus, we have two motives to sanctify Sundays well
  - Duty to worship God
  - Duty to fight modern culture founded on indifference to God.
- Responsibilities of Catholics
  - Chief duty is to assist at Mass, but this is not some isolated event whereby we drop by God’s house, say hello, and then go about our business for the remainder of the day
  - The whole day and everything we do is God’s in a particular manner. In fact, our whole life belongs to God, but He asks that we set aside this day of the week in a particular manner to give Him His proper place in the world and in our lives

### What is Father’s role?

- He is responsible for the direction and orientation of the family in all that pertains to God.
- Thus, he must ensure that everything in his home on Sundays is compatible with the purpose of the day.
  - Evidently, he will need the help of his wife to do this; indeed, she may be much more sensible about what will actually work on a practical level to attain this goal.

### Preparation for Sunday

- Remote

- Cultivating spirit that Sunday is the heart and summit of the week.
  - Everything should lead to it and everything should flow from it.
- For little children
  - Training to be still
  - Explanations and example of parents on joy of experiencing Sundays

— Proximate

- Saturday evening
  - Spiritual Preparation
    - Take some time with family the look ahead to the Mass of Sunday.
    - Prepare Intentions for Mass
  - Avoid worldly dissipation
    - We should not allow the rhythm of our home be shaped by men who do not know God.
      - I.e., it should not be a regular thing that we stay up late for parties or watching movies.
    - Good evening meal (not as nice as Sunday, but foretaste of it, in some way)
    - Family recreations/planning outings on Sunday
  - Material preparation for Sunday
    - Prep Sunday meals
    - Children prep what they will need
    - Complete as many chores and homework as possible
  - Ensuring a good bedtime

## Sunday Itself

— Sunday Mass

- This is the most important part of the day. Everything else should revolve around it.
  - Objectively, sung Mass is the norm.
- Ideal: Assist at Mass as a family (though exceptions are understood)
  - Teach children (age appropriate) to follow along in the Missal
  - Train children to assist.
    - Arrive in time to prepare
    - Explain to children and model for them what it means to assist
      - Be aware of their weakness.

- Train to listen to the sermon
  - Good act of thanksgiving
  - Cultivate politeness
- Sunday Meal
  - Should be ornate and special
    - Kids should remain well-dressed.
    - Slightly more formal than during the week, but joyful
  - As kids age, a good time to teach about drinking
- Sunday recreation
  - Purposes: to foster charity and deepen friendship, especially within family. Also, to refresh the mind and permit the opportunity to reflect on what matters in life
  - Personal Reflection
    - Make time to read on Sundays, perhaps a little more
    - Take time to think and to plan
  - Fostering charity (with family especially)
    - Walks or outings
    - Board games
    - Outdoor games (football, etc)
    - Visits to extended family, especially grandparents
    - Playing music & singing as a family
- Vespers and/or Benediction
  - We can consider this as a normal part of the Sunday, since the day as a whole is God's.
  - Develops our spirit of religion and is an opportunity for God to enrich us with His grace and blessings.

### Obstacles to Sunday

- Worldly entertainment
  - Channels of spirit of world
    - Frivolous entertainment
      - NFL or other sporting events. This is a spirit of self-seeking and only superficially serves to unite the family.
        - Boys game played by adults
        - Egocentric and proud
        - Surrounded by problematic advertising and spirit

- Eats up large chunks of time that could be better employed
  - Movies
  - Video games
- Unnecessary work & servile labor
  - Work = providing for material needs
  - Servile labor = work proper to slaves

## Conclusion

- To fight apostasy from God, we must put Him in His proper place where we are able.

## Challenges

- **Read**
  - **Joseph Pieper, *Leisure, the Basis of Culture***
- **Screen-less Sunday**
  - **Choose one Sunday at least in the next 4 weeks and refrain from all use of screens (no football, no video games, no phones).**
  - **Plan with your wife how to use the day**
- **Vespers & Benediction**
  - **On at least one Sunday, go to Vespers & Benediction**
  - **With just your wife, if you have children old enough to care for others**
  - **With older children**
  - **Take time to read about Vespers**