

Readings for Reflection and Prayer (folder)

“Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another; as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do. (Col 3:12-13)

Oh passionate prophetess, grant me courage to stand up in the face of justice and offer my resounding NO.

to embrace compassionate action with my echoing YES!

Share your holy daring to shatter complacency for the sake of truth, to relinquish false comfort for the sake of righteousness. to refuse to comply with any structures or strictures that do not hold all life as unutterably precious.

(Hildegard de Bingen)

In his apostolic exhortation *The Joy of the Gospel*, **Pope Francis** wrote: *The family is experiencing a profound cultural crisis, as are all communities and social bonds. In the case of the family, the weakening of these bonds is particularly serious because the family is the fundamental cell of society, where we learn to live with others despite our differences and to belong to one another; it is also the place where parents pass on the faith to their children.* 66. (P.49)

Marriage now tends to be viewed as a form of mere emotional satisfaction that can be constructed in any way or modified at will. But the indispensable contribution of marriage to society transcends the feelings and momentary needs of the couple. As the French bishops have taught, it is not born ‘of loving sentiment, ephemeral by definition, but from the depth of the obligation assumed by the spouses who accept to enter a total communion of life’.” (P.49)

He goes on further to say: *“we find true healing”* in the way we relate, as a *“mystical fraternity”* This can help us to **“find God in every human being, in tolerating the nuisances of life in common by clinging to the love of God”**.. He then says, *”We are called to bear witness to constantly new way of living together in fidelity to the gospel. Let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of community!* 92. (Page 66-67).

Ponder these thoughts while you read and pray:

Does a picture of the Family come to mind? Where are we positioned in Families as basic units in Communities, Families in Crisis Mode, Families with blessings to celebrate? How does Jesus talk to us? Where are we drawn?