

► Sunday, November 16, 2008, Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Pro 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31; Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5; I Thes 5:1-6; Mt 25:14-30 or 25:14-15, 19-20

Week #13: Main Theme: Openness to and education of children as a responsibility of parents.

Have you ever thought of children as olive plants? Probably not. But if you have ever thought of them as blessings, then you are thinking along the same lines of today's psalm. "Olive plant" is shorthand for "a blessing that keeps on giving." Our society tends to paint children as burdens that take away our freedom. But the Church has always taught that having children protects and increases the benefits of marriage for the husband and wife. Most of you are called to the vocation of marriage, and thus you are given your talents, your unique personal strengths, so that you can put them to work as good fathers or mothers: to raise children who blossom in the light of your caring love. Do I bury my intelligence, initiative, and creativity in the pursuit of selfish ends? Or do I energetically and generously employ my talents for the sake of selfless love?

Bulletin quote: "The innate language that expresses the total reciprocal self-giving of husband and wife is overlaid, through contraception, by an objectively contradictory language, namely, that of not giving oneself totally to the other. This leads not only to a positive refusal to be open to life but also to a falsification of the inner truth of conjugal love, which is called upon to give itself in personal totality."

Pope John Paul II, *Familiaris consortio*, #32