

Model Mother for Modern Women

Dr. S. Amala Fatima Rani* & Mrs. D. Roselin Selvarani**

* Associate Professor in Chemistry, Holy Cross College (Autonomous), Trichy - 2.

**Asst. Professor in Computer Science, Holy Cross College (Autonomous),
Trichy - 2

Introduction

A living model is an open book that is easy for any one to emulate. Mother Claudine Echernier's life exhibits a flawless model for the youth and women. Human learning takes place by Imitation. Imitation calls for some living leader to perform and practice the values that has been imbibed and imitated from the God fearing parents. The God fearing parents of Mother Claudine were her leaders whom she followed as a child. Looking at Mother Claudine's life, the values and qualities can be isolated which are simple and concrete samples of the modest life of Mother Claudine, which would enable every modern girl and woman of the 21st Century to put the same into practice and thus fill the gap between ancient and modern human living.

1. Goal Orientation

Present era of consumerism has made human life a life of selfishness, a life of living the present without any goal in life. Our model mother had shown us the simple ways to lead a life with goal and direction. Mother Claudine always looked for making the good God known and loved (F.A. Pg. 74). The Love of Jesus on the Cross made her to emulate Jesus as a model. Her goal in life was to make the good God known to others by living a life that Jesus led.

2. Love for the family

Mother Claudine lost her mother at the age of 15. An age of stress and storm for any adolescent girl to pass through, she tried to manage this predicament by involving in casual ways of living. The situations demanded this tender girl to substitute her mother's role. She loved each one of her younger brothers and sisters. The poor but big family required her total dedication and commitment. She showed utmost care to her brothers and sisters but, if it was not for her love, affection and hard work they would have died of hunger.

3. Everything for the family

As the income through her father - the sole bread winner was not sufficient to make both ends meet, she took up the job of serving in the presbytery and earn for the family. She took up the job of a maidservant. She looked after the herds. Whatever she earned was totally used to take care of the family. She reserved nothing for her personal needs. She never had any unrealistic need fulfilled.

4. Challenging the Challenges

“Life is not a bed of roses”

Mother Claudine’s father was imprisoned for two and a half years for no fault of his. The family lost the major source of income. Now Mother Claudine was the only hope of the family for everything. This predicament did not disappoint the young lady, rather it made her stronger in faith, empowered her to challenge the challenges that society and nature had posed on her. She put her heart and soul to care for the children and at the same time never failed to visit her father who was in prison with gifts bought from her earnings. On no occasion she made any complaints concerning her father. She looked after the family with utmost unselfishness and care.

5. Frailty Feared

As the life became ruff and tuff, Mother Claudine grew strong in faith and persevered to finish the odds and mind her own family members as well as the children of the parish. She edified her character and was attracted to people who were edifying too. Laziness did not find a place in the dictionary of her life. She took additional works like hat making, stitching and teaching morals and values to the young ones at home and at the parish.

She had shown the model to keep oneself engaged always in healthy ways of making an earning and a habit of managing the time in a useful way. She never looked for a chance to rest and relax.

6. Industrious and Active

“Healthy habits and hard work keep the doctor away”

Mother Claudine had never been to a doctor for any treatment. The industrious ways of leading life makes one healthier and stronger to fight the health hazards. She worked continuously and never remained idle. (F.A. Pg. 287). She considered Work as Worship and took the trouble to instill in her young brothers and sisters the love for work. As soon as she saw them unoccupied she made them plait straw, with which she made hats, late into the night by the light of her little lamp (F.A. Pg. 70). She toiled day and night according to 2 Thessalonians 3: 8, in which St.Paul says, "...Instead we worked and toiled; we kept working day and night ...".

7. Religion and Life

Technology driven and enslaved life finds no time to spare for family prayers and family gatherings in the evenings. This makes the modern women to be more stress prone, give importance to mundane life resulting in much of family disorganization.

Faith and Belief marks the human life. Mother's fervent attempts to be pious and faithful to Jesus' teaching made her lead a prayerful life. She carried Jesus within herself. He was her life according to Galatians 2:20. "It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me". Her thoughts, her words and her works, all were animated by the spirit of the Lord (F.A. Pg.287). Apart from mothering her kiths she led them to pray both in the morning and evening every day without ceasing. She attended vespers in the church everyday evening. This kept her disturbed family stay together.

8. Guidance for dual career women

In order to make herself more useful to her family, Mother Claudine learned to stitch. During apprenticeship she was at Marin staying with Marie Poncet. Living away from her father's house she did not forget those whom she had left behind. Every Saturday she returned home inspected her little home, took care of every need of the children and returned to her mistress on Monday morning and resumed her work for the week (F.A. Pg 71).

9. An Exemplary Women

Mother Claudine taught catechism to the youth of the parish and made them read the life of Saints which she kept on her table for ready use and reference. Her exemplary life of what she

taught and lived made the parishioners to flock to her for moral teachings. In mother's life, both preaching and practising went hand in hand.

Her remarkable acceptance of people was revealed when she stitched the wedding clothes for her step mother who was to be married by her father.

10. Obedience and Humbleness pays

As the Holy Bible says in Philippians 2:8, "Jesus was humble and walked the path of obedience all the way to death – his death on the cross", Mother Claudine too practised obedience and humbleness throughout her life. She obeyed her Superiors and the holy Rules according to the verses, "Slaves, obey your human masters with fear and trembling; and do it with a sincere heart, as though you were serving Christ" in Ephesians 6:5. She obeyed not only her superiors, but often also her inferiors. (F.A. Pg. 303). She never took any decision without consulting Fr. Mermier, the Parish Priest of Feterne. She was sincere and hardworking to the maximum extent that even her master himself was worried that the way Mother Claudine exerted herself should not affect her health.

Her sincerity in duty, commitment to the role assigned, led her masters and mistress to respect Mother Claudine and her piety.

Conclusion

It is clear and vivid that the values and characters that Mother Claudine cherished as young women in order to "Make the Good God known and Loved", made our beloved Mother Claudine to be the "Model Women of the Modern Era". Mother Claudine's distinct characters like Unselfishness, Devotedness, Love for Work and Sincere Piety are very much wanted for today's Modern Women. Let us pledge on this day of the commemoration of Our Mother Foundress, to be Sincere in duty, Pure in heart and Love for Work and Worship. This will render a real tribute to our Beloved Mother Foundress.

References

1. Sisters Maria Goretti & Berchmans, "Family Annals, History of the Congregation of the Daughters of the Cross of Chavanod, France", (Translated from French version), Volume I, 4th Edition, S.F.S. Publications, Visakhapatnam – Bangalore, 1984.

2. "Good News Bible", Catholic Edition, Today's English Version, St. Paul Publications, Bombay, 1988.