

# The Letter to the Ephesians

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## Ephesians 6:1-2 The duties of children

**2214** The divine fatherhood is the source of human fatherhood; (Cf. *Eph* 3:14) this is the foundation of the honor owed to parents. The respect of children, whether minors or adults, for their father and mother (Cf. *Prov* 1:8; *Tob* 4:3-4) is nourished by the natural affection born of the bond uniting them. It is required by God's commandment. (Cf. *Ex* 20:12.)

**2215** Respect for parents (*filial piety*) derives from *gratitude* toward those who, by the gift of life, their love and their work, have brought their children into the world and enabled them to grow in stature, wisdom, and grace. "With all your heart honor your father, and do not forget the birth pangs of your mother. Remember that through your parents you were born; what can you give back to them that equals their gift to you?" (*Sir* 7:27-28.)

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**2216** Filial respect is shown by true docility and *obedience*. "My son, keep your father's commandment, and forsake not your mother's teaching. . . . When you walk, they will lead you; when you lie down, they will watch over you; and when you awake, they will talk with you." (Prov 6:20-22.) "A wise son hears his father's instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke." (Prov 13:1.)

**2217** As long as a child lives at home with his parents, the child should obey his parents in all that they ask of him when it is for his good or that of the family. "Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord."(Col 3:20; Cf. Eph 6:1.) Children should also obey the reasonable directions of their teachers and all to whom their parents have entrusted them. But if a child is convinced in conscience that it would be morally wrong to obey a particular order, he must not do so.

As they grow up, children should continue to respect their parents. They should anticipate their wishes, willingly seek their advice, and accept their just admonitions. Obedience toward parents ceases with the emancipation of the children; not so respect, which is always owed to them. This respect has its roots in the fear of God, one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

**2218** The fourth commandment reminds grown children of their *responsibilities toward their parents*. As much as they can, they must give them material and moral support in old age and in times of illness, loneliness, or distress. Jesus recalls this duty of gratitude.(Cf. Mk 7:10-12)

For the Lord honored the father above the children, and he confirmed the right of the mother over her sons. Whoever honors his father atones for sins, and whoever glorifies his mother is like one who lays up treasure. Whoever honors his father will be gladdened by his own children, and when he prays he will be heard. Whoever glorifies his father will have long life, and whoever obeys the Lord will refresh his mother. (Sir 3:2-6.)

O son, help your father in his old age, and do not grieve him as long as he lives; even if he is lacking in understanding, show forbearance; in all your strength do not despise him. . . . Whoever forsakes his father is like a blasphemer, and whoever angers his mother is cursed by the Lord.(Sir 3:12-13, 16.)

**2220** For Christians a special gratitude is due to those from whom they have received the gift of faith, the grace of Baptism, and life in the Church. These may include parents, grandparents, other members of the family, pastors, catechists, and other teachers or friends. "I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you." (2 Tim 1:5.)

### Ephesians 6:18 Pray at all times

**2633** When we share in God's saving love, we understand that every need can become the object of petition. Christ, who assumed all things in order to redeem all

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things, is glorified by what we ask the Father in his name. It is with this confidence that St. James and St. Paul exhort us to pray at all times.

**2742** "Pray constantly . . . always and for everything giving thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father." ( 1 Thess 5:17; Eph 5:20.) St. Paul adds, "Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance making supplication for all the saints." (Eph 6:18. )For "we have not been commanded to work, to keep watch and to fast constantly, but it has been laid down that we are to pray without ceasing." This tireless fervor can come only from love. Against our dullness and laziness, the battle of prayer is that of humble, trusting, and persevering love. This love opens our hearts to three enlightening and life-giving facts of faith about prayer.