

Parental Roles and Leadership

One reads on a daily basis in various news sources that the government is encroaching on the rights of parents over their children. The government claims it is its place to educate children and some even want to make it compulsory by forcing parents to send their kids to public schools where they can be indoctrinated in what they call the latest and greatest but which is nothing more than a failing sex education experiment. However, despite all of this encroachment, it is my contention that the greatest subverters of the temporal and spiritual authority and leadership over their children are the parents and children themselves.

Since leadership within the family, as will be seen, consists in the husband and wife fulfilling their proper roles, what can be said of leadership may conversely be said of roles. Yet, roles within the family are based upon authority and so it is necessary to talk about parental authority. The understanding of the temporal and spiritual authority of parents, however, is first founded on the understanding of the nature of authority. Authority is defined as “the moral right to direct the conduct of others and the duty on their part of obedience.”¹ In like manner, Leo XIII in the document *Libertas Praestantissimum*² provides the following description or even definition, we may say, of authority:

For since the force of law consists in the imposing of obligations and the granting of rights, authority is the one and only foundation of all law – the power, that is, of fixing duties and defining rights, as also of assigning the necessary sanctions of reward and chastisement to each and all of its commands.

Authority is the right to impose on others an obligation, i.e. they are bound to follow the precepts of the authority. It consists in the right of governance over the actions of others in relation to that over which he has authority, be it persons or things. In this sense, parents have authority over their children and so their children are obligated to submit to the authority of their parents. Furthermore, others cannot act upon the children without permission. Having authority also consists in the giving

¹The Catholic Encyclopedia Dictionary, The Gilmore Society, 1941, p. 82.

²Para. 8.

of reward and chastisements to each and all of the persons over whom they have authority. Parents have a right and obligation to reward or punish their child by virtue of the authority which they have over them.

Yet, these assertions require the understanding of two more things, viz. what is a right and from whence is authority derived. The term *right* is defined in a slightly different fashion by various authors but they tend to have pretty much the same meaning; a right “is defined as a moral power vested in a person to which the holder of the power may claim something as due to him or as belonging to him, or to demand of others that they perform some acts or abstain from them.” A right is something which gives a person the ability or capacity to have a say over something and/or which requires obligations on the side of others to render the thing or some action to the person holding the right. In this sense, a right is something which obliges others to respect and observe as well as render to another when justice demands it.

Authority is a right, since it is something possessed by the holder which obliges two categories of persons: (1) those under the authority must render to the authority that which he asks of them and (2) those not under the authority must respect and not encroach upon that authority by contravening it or by acting on the thing or person over which he has authority. In the context of parental rights over their children, it means that parents have the right to say what the child will and will not do. The children have an obligation in justice to render to the parents their due and the civil authorities must not infringe on the rights of the parents.

All rights are of two kinds, absolute and conditional. An absolute right is one in which no one under any circumstances may contravene in relation to the thing over which the person has a right. A conditional right is one in which the right is bounded or limited either by the nature of the thing or the nature of the relationship the person has to the thing. What this means is that no creature has an absolute right; only God has an absolute right for only He is the author of the *whole* of creation and since the whole of creation depends on God in every way, then He has every right, i.e. an absolute right of the disposition of His creation. Man, on the other hand, only has conditional rights, which are limited first and foremost by the natural law. Even the right to life is not an absolute right because (a) God has the right to take our life and (b) our right to life is bounded by the natural law, i.e. one’s right cannot exceed the limits of the right conceded. For instance, the state

in being entrusted with the care of the common good, has a conditional or limited right over the lives of the citizens by being able to tell certain members of the society to lay down their life for the protection of the society, e.g. in times of war. The difficulty, of course, consists in precisely where the limits lie in relation to the right, but here again, we know what the rights are and their limits by means of the natural law.

This brings us to the question of the derivation of authority. If authority is a right over something or someone, by its very nature, authority establishes an inequality; for superior and inferior are not equal, at least in relation to the aspect over which the superior has authority. Let us put it a different way: no man by virtue of his human nature has a right over another man; by this is meant that since men are equal in essence, no man is essentially above another man and so no man can have authority derived from his essence over another man. Yet, man has accidents and the metaphysicians tell us that accidents are in a hierarchy. We see this by virtue of the fact that some people have superior accidents to other, e.g. some are more intelligent, some are more beautiful, some are more physically powerful, etc. In this sense, it is possible that one man has authority over another man by virtue of some accident which he possesses in relation to the person, e.g. a father who has begotten a son does not have authority over the son by virtue of his essence but by virtue of his accident of the office of fatherhood. Fatherhood is a superior accident to sonship and so fathers can have authority over sons.

Authority gives one the ability to bind one in conscience and, yet, no man, merely by being a man, has the right to bind another man in conscience. Our Lord confirms this conclusion by the words which He has spoke through St. Paul in his letter to the Romans:³ “Let every soul be subject to higher powers: for there is no power but from God: and those that are, are ordained of God. Therefore he that resists the power, resists the ordinance of God. And they that resist, purchase to themselves damnation.” We also know that all authority must in some way be derived from Christ, since He told us while on earth,⁴ “All power is given to me in heaven and in earth.” The

³Romans 13:1f.

⁴Matthew 28:18.

Magisterium also confirms this since it says “Lawful power is from God,”⁵ and in another place: “With God and Jesus excluded from public life, with authority derived not from God but from man, the very basis of that authority has been taken away.”⁶ This essentially means that all authority is in some way derived from God. Even if one argues that the authority is derived from the people, God is the cause of the people as well as the Natural Law and so the authority is still derived from God, just indirectly.

This applies to parents, for we see this by virtue of the prior Scriptural quotes but we can also see it from the point of view of the natural law. We see in children a natural inclination⁷ to submit to their parents. When a child acts according to the natural law and when the parents give him a lawful command, the child feels compelled to obey his parents and not others. Even though original and actual sin have eroded this a bit, nevertheless, children naturally gravitate to the parents to tell them what to do, which can be especially understood in times of distress or trouble. When there is some serious event, the child naturally looks to the parents to direct him away from the difficulty. This natural inclination stems from the fact that children are not born with sufficient experience and knowledge to guide themselves and so they must depend on the parents to do so. It is not until a child reaches puberty that the changes in bodily dispositions embolden the child to think he is capable of complete independence. Of course, the child’s experiences prior to puberty do not fully make him capable of dealing with the emotions and passions which differ after puberty since he lacks experience in handling them. Even though general precepts from parents may help, the application of the precepts in the concrete becomes difficult due to the passions which blind his judgment. For a time, he needs the wisdom of the parents whose passions should be ordered through virtue and whose experience should have made them wise.

We now can return to the observations with which this conference began. First, since parents have been given authority over the child, conceded by God through the natural law to the parents, then the state cannot infringe upon the rights of parents unless, through some defect of the parents,

⁵Leo XIII, *Libertas Praestantissimum*, para 13.

⁶Pius XI, *Ubi Arcano Dei Consilio* as quoted in *Quas Primas*, para. 18 by the same pope (as found at www.ewtn.com).

⁷In Thomistic terms (see ST I-II, q. 94, a. 2), this inclination is part of the third category of natural inclination.

grave harm would come to the child. One of the signs that people do not grasp that the authority of the parents comes from God is the fact that when people see a child being physically disciplined in a manner consistent with virtue, they run off to the civil authorities to intervene because they think the state has the ultimate rights over the child. Most social programs run by the state suffer from a failure to understand that their rights only pertain to the common good and cannot infringe upon the rights and authority of the parents without it somehow gravely touching upon the common good.

Yet, we must address the problem of how parents and children undermine this God given authority. First let us start with children because it is the easiest to see. Children, by disobedience and disrespect, undermine the authority of their parents. Each time a parent gives a child a lawful command and the child does not fulfill it, the child violates the rights of the parents to govern him according to the natural law. On the other hand, parents can indirectly undermine their authority by not properly governing their children since the authority becomes psychologically undermined in the minds of the children by inconsistent or altogether missing direction, governance and discipline.

We now move to a more thorny issue and that is the rights of the father over the family. The submission of the wife to husband is a principle not only manifest in natural law but in divine positive law. The natural law reasons involve too many complexities and so we will stick only with the divine positive law. Our Lord said by means of St. Paul, "Let women be subject to their husbands as to the Lord, because the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the Church."⁸

This passage is interpreted by Pius XI in the following manner:

This order includes both the primacy of the husband with regard to the wife and children, the ready subjection of the wife and her willing obedience, which the Apostle commends in these words: "Let women be subject to their husbands as to the Lord, because the husband is the head of the wife, and Christ is the head of the Church." ...It forbids that exaggerated liberty which cares not for the good of the family; it forbids that in this body which is the family, the heart be separated from the head to the great detriment of the whole body and the proximate danger of ruin. For if the man is the head, the woman is the heart, and as he occupies the chief place in ruling, so she may and ought to claim for herself the chief place in love. ...But the structure of the family and its fundamental law, established and confirmed by God,

⁸Ephesians 5:22f.

must always and everywhere be maintained intact.⁹

Leo XIII put it this way: “The husband is the chief of the family and the head of the wife.”¹⁰ The husband as head of the family has a temporal authority insofar as it is his duty and right to provide materially for and to protect physically his family, since the nature of fatherhood is to provide and to protect. He also has a spiritual authority insofar as his obligations to the children are not merely physical but also spiritual and so he also enjoys a spiritual authority insofar as it pertains to the father to determine the cult of a family. Since the husband must provide and protect his family, not just physically but spiritually from those things which can psychologically, morally and spiritually harm his family, he enjoys a certain spiritual power. It is for this reason that prayers, sufferings and good works offered to God for the spiritual protection and providence of his family are of key importance. It pertains to the father, first and foremost, to protect his children spiritually. Since he has the authority, the father, more than the wife, has the capacity to merit the grace for his wife to lead a life of virtue. Whenever a husband fails to pray, suffer and do good works to merit graces for his wife and family, he fails in the most important task as husband and father. For the father provides for his family spiritually by meriting the graces for his wife (and children) to lead a life according to virtue in accordance with her state. When the father sees a moral or spiritual fault in his wife or child, he fails to provide for them if he merely temporally admonishes them. Rather, once he sees the defect, he must spiritually do what he can to merit the grace as well as direct his children and wife through his commands to lead them to virtue. He must protect his family spiritually, not only by not allowing things like pornography, false religions, etc. to enter the minds and senses of his wife and children, but by praying, suffering and doing good works to keep the demonic away from his family. Since the husband has been entrusted to protect his wife and children spiritually, if the demonic attack his family, the merits of the father to ward off the demonic are more powerful by virtue of his office as husband than his wife’s.¹¹ Moreover, since the demons must respect the order of authority, the father

⁹Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*, para. 26 (as found at www.ewtn.com).

¹⁰Leo XIII, *Arcanum divinae sapientiae*, para. 11 (as found at www.ewtn.com).

¹¹Here we are prescinding from the relative merit in which a wife, if more holy, can merit more, not by virtue of her office as wife but by virtue of her excellence in grace.

enters more efficaciously into the spiritual warfare with the demonic since ultimately they must submit to the order of authority established by God.

Here, however, we see how damaging false feminism is. If a wife refuses to submit to the authority of her husband, she loses the spiritual protection and providence of her husband. Whatever rises against an order or authority is deprived of that order and the principle of order. This means that when a wife volitionally rejects the authority of her husband as her spiritual head and head of the family, she takes herself out from underneath his spiritual protection and becomes vulnerable to the demonic since she has taken herself out from under the hierarchy of authority as established by God. Moreover, if she counsels her children contrary to her husband in a matter over which he has legitimate say or if she refuses to allow the children to be under her husband, she also affects the spiritual providence and protection of the children. While the husband can still exert his authority over the children, if the children take the lead of the mother in contravening his authority, the children lose that protection. We can also say this even if the children do so contrary to the consent of the mother. The father, by virtue of the office of fatherhood, has rights over the wife and children, and so when the wife and children submit to the father, they enjoy the fruits of those rights, i.e. spiritual providence and protection. Therefore, a wife should not view her subjection to her husband as a loss of freedom or control, but as a form of protection and providence, i.e. a means to her own holiness and spiritual safety.

Feminism, and by feminism is meant false feminism and not the feminism which strives to recapture the perfections of the truly feminine, directly attacks the spiritual and temporal protection and providence of the family. Power, like nature, abhors a vacuum. Either the man will be head of the house or the wife will; it is that simple. Feminists themselves are clear when they say that their movement is about power. But what they do not realize is that by grasping for an illusory feeling of being freed from “male domination,” they, in fact, place themselves open to demonic domination. Once they reject the authority of their husbands, they now become subject to the demonic since they have stepped outside the divinely established order of authority which leaves them unprotected and open to demonic influence. Once that occurs, the demonic can gain greater control over their emotional and appetite life, which results in a loss of freedom because they are now dominated by

their passions.¹² It is for this reason as well as the fact that they are acting contrary to the natural law, that happiness and false feminism are mutually exclusive.

The defect of original sin of self will cannot be the determining factor in how women will lead their lives. They must overcome their self will by submitting to the divinely given authority of the husband and the husband overcomes his self will because now he must tend not to self, but to the spiritual and temporal welfare of his family. The moral of the story is that no creature ever gets absolute self governance. Let us be clear, the feminist movement has not increased the freedom of women but has left them slaves. Many women now *must* work because, with the glut of workers in the work force, the market will only pay so much and so a husband cannot, as a rule, sufficiently provide for his family. Feminism has locked women into a psychological prison by fashioning the mentality of the society into thinking that if a woman wants to stay home and take care of her children, she is inferior, there is something wrong with her or she is setting the feminist movement back by not being on the front lines.

Feminism has also had the bad effect of causing the rights of fathers to diminish within society and in the eyes of governmental officials. This has led to a general moral and spiritual weakening of both government and society because they have stepped out from underneath the proper hierarchy of authority which respects the authority of the father. This has left the society as a whole unprotected and unprovided spiritually and temporally. The allowing of divorce has had a direct impact on this spiritual protection and providence for the children which in turn has had a general weakening effect on men psychologically because they no longer view themselves as head. Consequently, they no longer fulfill their temporal and spiritual responsibilities to their wives and children.

Since the father has a right in justice to protect his family, he also must pray for himself so that he does not surrender his authority and allow it to be usurped by his wife, children or others. Since his prayer stems from a right to govern and is in congruity with the divine providential plan, it is a holy prayer and therefore God will hear it. The husband must protect his authority, not as a

¹²This is one of the reasons why feminists tend to suffer from the passion of anger. Another reason is that the divinely established structure of the family and society is built into the natural law which means man will always be inclined to establish things in that manner. As a result, feminists are constantly frustrated by the natural inclination in others as it plays itself out in the lives of the feminists.

means of controlling his wife, but to make her more free, i.e. to aid her and to protect her. He must protect his authority in order to protect his wife and it is here that we see the massive failure that has led to our feminized culture.

The collapse of fatherhood is not due to women; it is due to men. Because men have not been men, women have been allowed to take positions for which God never intended them. If men would have protected their authority, none of this ever would have happened. But instead, men, in not having the proper self discipline which is proper to men, sought to please women or use them in ways which were inconsistent with true manhood, and so they allowed women to pursue a feminist mentality. It is here that the ultimate blame must rest; in a word, men are more responsible for the feminist movement than women and for this reason men will pay the greater price, and not merely in the next life. For while true feminism has become distorted, true masculinity has been all but lost.

Other reasons men lose their proper authority are by (a) not observing the proper authority of the wife over the children as mother; (b) by not consulting her when prudence dictates and (c) not treating her with the dignity that is due her, either as a human being or according to her office as wife. We see this in conjunction to the words of Pius XI again:

Domestic society being confirmed, therefore, by this bond of love, there should flourish in it that "order of love," as St. Augustine calls it. ...This subjection, however, does not deny or take away the liberty which fully belongs to the woman both in view of her dignity as a human person, and in view of her most noble office as wife and mother and companion; nor does it bid her obey her husband's every request if not in harmony with right reason or with the dignity due to wife; nor, in fine, does it imply that the wife should be put on a level with those persons who in law are called minors, to whom it is customary to allow free exercise of their rights on account of their lack of mature judgment, or of their ignorance of human affairs.¹³

When a man assumes the headship of a home, he must respect the inherent dignity of his wife. He should not treat her in a manner inconsistent with the closest of friendships, since marriage by nature

¹³Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*, paras. 26-8.

constitutes the closest of friendships. Now since friendship is founded upon mutual love,¹⁴ the husband should not govern his family in any manner that is contrary to rightly ordered love. Men often experience a certain rebellion from their wives because of mistreatment or a lack of legitimate concern for their wives. While this is an admonition to husbands, it does not give the excuse to the wives to use it as a means of manipulating their husbands.

Moreover, women often rebel when the husband acts without consulting her or in a manner which the wife considers imprudent. Just as reason must take into consideration the condition of the body when it deliberates about what action to perform, so the husband should take into consideration the good of his wife. He should also consult his wife when (a) there is a possibility that the wife may know more about the children since she lives more closely with them or (b) when she may have a particular ability in an area upon which the counsel touches. Just as it is imprudent sometimes to act without consulting others, so it can be imprudent, at times, for a husband to act without consulting his wife. This also follows from the fact that if the wife is consulted, it will psychologically dispose her to follow the governance of her husband because she knows he has taken her counsel into consideration. In this respect, we see that governance in the family is more of a political rule rather than a despotic rule. For just as a president or king more efficaciously rules when he persuades the citizens of the good of a law, so a husband is more able to lead his wife by consulting her and explaining his reasons. While it is true that sometimes the nature of the circumstances do not permit him to consult his wife or if the wife is not open to a rational discussion, he has the obligation to lead, even if the wife resists. This also does not take away the wife's right to object when the course of action clearly violates God's law or right reason.

The husband can also undermine his authority by not respecting the office of motherhood and of wife. Just as the husband and father is an office of governance and headship, so is the office of mother in relation to the children. Since the wife must be subject to her husband, her governance of the children must be in accordance with the legitimate commands of her husband. Yet, if the husband does not respect the office of motherhood by not recognizing the authority of his wife over the children, albeit her authority is subject to him, then he disrespects God from whom the authority

¹⁴ST II-II, q. 23, a. 1.

of the office of motherhood is derived and divides the governance of the family. As St. Thomas has pointed out,¹⁵ governance is always done through a unified principle, whether it is the king who is one, or the aristocracy which acts together as one when it legislates or when by the multitude by consent of the majority which acts as one, so in the family the husband and wife must rule together as a single unit. If the husband, without reason, contravenes the mother's governance of the children, he weakens his own governance. Instead of ruling his children directly by having the right to give them a command directly *and* indirectly through his wife, he is reduced to ruling only directly. This means that when he is away, the children will recognize a shift in the power structure within the family and thereby not obey their mother since they can always think to themselves that they can tell their mother no because dad would disagree or something of this nature. In effect, the principle of governing unity is torn asunder by the bifurcation of the husband and wife not acting as one. It is only in serious matters that the husband should contravene the governance of his wife. He must respect the office of motherhood insofar as it is also instituted by God, i.e. its authority is derived from God as well. While it is true that her authority must be subject to his, nevertheless, it does have its own intrinsic authority, not completely derived from his but from God. This flows from the natural law insofar as children have a natural inclination to obey not just the father but the mother as well even though their obedience should be first to the father.¹⁶

If a man contravenes the authority of his wife without sufficient reason, the natural inclination of his wife to govern the children becomes frustrated and enmity can arise between the man and his wife. Whereas when the husband affirms the authority of his wife to govern the children, the proper order intended by God is fulfilled and so peace, which is the tranquility of order, comes to the house. Moreover, if the children clearly recognize that the parents are unified in heart and in mind and work together, the wife under the husband in unity, they are more likely to learn the proper understanding of authority both in the family and out and more likely to be obedient and respectful of authority both in the family and out.

Another way a husband undermines his own authority is by not respecting the office of wife.

¹⁵*De regimine principum*, chpt. 2.

¹⁶The principle holds true unless the father exhorts the children to do something sinful.

The office of a wife consists in the obligation to maintain and at times arrange the disposition of the home. Because the husband normally should be working, he cannot tend to the upkeep of the home and so God established the office of wife. It is for this reason that it is more connatural for a wife to determine the disposition or arrangement of the home. While a man has ultimate say, normally it should be left to the wife since she is the one that has to clean, take care and use the home to raise the children and to serve her husband. Often men will ridicule and complain about the wife's disposition of the home and this can have a divisive effect within the family.¹⁷ The result being that the wife begins to listen to her husband less or tries to manipulate him because she wants something for the home or does not want him affecting things at home. By doing so, she seeks to assume a position of power over her husband and so the husband himself is the indirect cause of his own loss of his wife's lack of submission.

The second aspect of the office of wife is the obligation to serve the husband. We read in Genesis that, "for Adam there was not found a helper like himself"¹⁸ and so the commentators throughout history have interpreted this section of Genesis meaning that woman was made for man. From this is derived the notion that because the man is the head of the house, it is the place of the woman to serve her husband. Not as a slave, a minor or an animal, but as someone worthy of the man's appreciation because she is flesh of his flesh. St. Thomas makes the observation that when someone does us a favor, in justice we owe them thanks.¹⁹ This means that when the wife takes care of the home and makes the meals, in justice the husband owes her gratitude and not ridicule or disrespect.²⁰ Each time he fails to act in a manner that shows gratitude, he demeans the office of wife and thereby disrespects the office which God Himself has established; in a phrase, he sins. But

¹⁷A woman must use moderation in how she disposes the home by not purchasing unnecessary items and things of this sort and then the husband will be less likely to complain. Obviously, if the financial support of the family is coming from his hard work, he will feel like his hard work is going to waste if the financial aspect of disposing the home is not moderated. Yet, on the other hand, husbands have to have sufficient detachment from the fruits of their work so that they do not become miserly in regards to proper disposition of the home.

¹⁸Genesis 2:20.

¹⁹ST II-II, q. 106f.

²⁰In the well known track in the Old testament *Mulierem Fortem*, the proper appreciation that a man should have for his wife is given foundation in the goodness of the wife herself, see Proverbs 31:10-31. If a wife is a good wife, then he ought to appreciate her.

in like manner, whenever we do something for someone and he shows no appreciation, we begin to lose our appetitive attachment to him and it can culminate in hatred since the person recognizes that he does not appreciate us and looks down on us. This aspect results in the wife hating or distrusting her husband which in turn moves her not to be submissive. In this respect, the husband has an obligation to show his wife the proper appreciation and to respect her office as wife in order to preserve his own proper authority. If a man's wife is not submissive because he is cruel or disrespecting of her, or worse yet physically or psychologically abusive, he has only himself to blame. Therefore, his right to govern can suffer injury from his own hands.

Yet, since the right to govern is like all rights afforded to a creature, none of them are absolute and so it is possible for the father to lose his right of governance, not only temporarily but permanently, e.g. if he were to pose a grave threat to the spiritual or physical well being of the children. But like other natural rights, once the impediment which blocks the exercise of the right is removed, the husband regains his right of governance. If the husband is incapable of fulfilling some aspect of the headship of the home, the wife may take over, if necessary. Here we see the wisdom of the words of Pius XI again:

Again, this subjection of wife to husband in its degree and manner may vary according to the different conditions of persons, place and time. In fact, if the husband neglect his duty, it falls to the wife to take his place in directing the family. But the structure of the family and its fundamental law, established and confirmed by God, must always and everywhere be maintained intact.²¹

Only a defect on the side of the male counter-part allows the wife to assume some responsibility normally reserved to the husband. By defect here is not meant, necessarily, a moral defect, e.g. if a husband goes off to war or is killed, the wife must assume the responsibilities of the husband. But notice that this is because of some defect which makes it physically or morally impossible for the male to fulfill his role. I have heard confessions long enough and I believe I am old enough to say that often women use some slight moral defect on the side of their husband in order to engage in power grabbing. The assuming of the responsibility must have a sufficient reason, and the fact that

²¹Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*, para. 28.

one's husband may put his socks on the end of the bed or because he picks his teeth is not a sufficient reason for his wife to try to take control over the family. On the other hand, since the male has a grave responsibility as head of the household, his obligations and responsibilities require an exacting account before God for their execution. If he fails in his responsibility, he will pay a greater price than his wife. In this respect, it is easier for a woman to save her soul than a man, because original sin has left men with the wound of not wanting to take responsibility, at times, for his family because the task is arduous. If he does not fulfill his responsibility, it is because he is succumbing to self will which does not want to suffer. Yet, women have also been affected by original sin and since their natural inclination is to be provided for and protected, then the original sin and actual sin incline women to reject the providence and protection by trying to assume the position of command.

Virtue is that which perfects the inclinations of nature and if a male who is inclined by nature to assume the headship fails to do so, he will be a vicious man, not angry or mean necessarily, but a coward and weak. On the other hand, a virtuous woman will seek a man who will provide and protect her so that she can act according to the natural law, i.e. a virtuous wife is someone who seeks to aid her husband so that he can provide for and protect the family the way he should. Only pride and self will drives a woman to seek control and in our culture only pride and self will causes a man to surrender his authority to his wife. For it takes a truly humble man to go against the culture and sometimes even the disordered inclinations of his wife to assume authority because he will not be loved by this world, and perhaps not even by his wife for doing so. He will suffer self will for he will not submit to the divine providential plan which dictates the structure of the family. The man must also seek meekness so that he does not go to extremes in his reactions in the governance of his wife and family, but does so only according to right reason. In the end, the temporal and spiritual authority of parents is there to build virtue in the husband and the wife as well as the children. As long as our culture is dominated by pride and self will fueled by disordered passions, it will never enjoy the peace of the rightly ordered family. Feminism must vanish if our culture is ever to have interior peace again and if true leadership within the family is to take root.

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