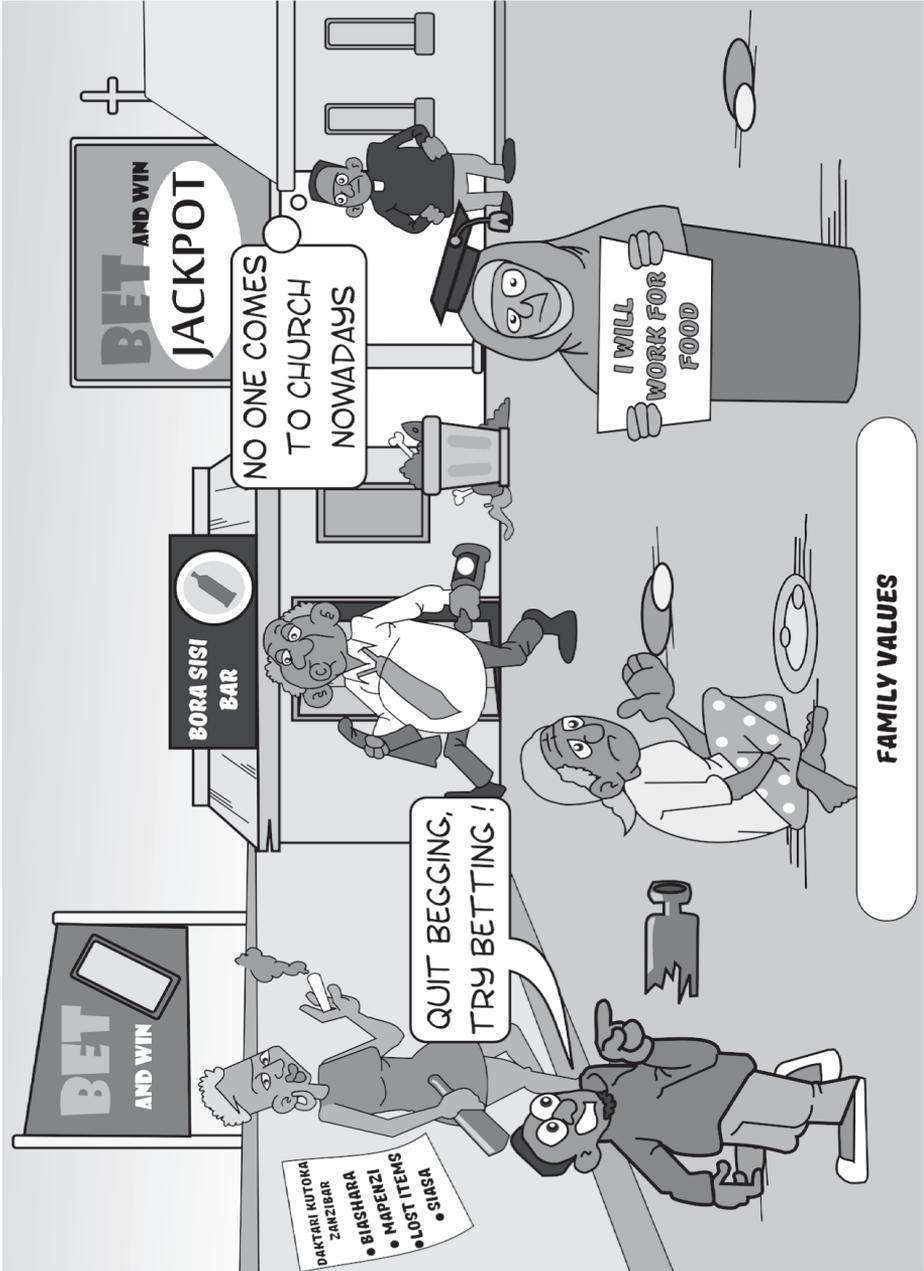


# Week Two

## Family Values



FAMILY VALUES

# Family Values

## See: Story

**B**ora Sisi village was well known for its family values and good morals. The village was cohesive, progressive and had established and respected institutions of leadership, marriage and family. Everybody had a role to play. Mothers spent time with their daughters and fathers were with their sons, nurturing them on values.

With time, however, the village was caught up in secularisation and external influence. People started leading careless lives and never bothered about the affairs of others. It did not matter the age or gender. Marriage and family values were no longer held with high esteem; leading to broken families, marriages and other institutions of formation. With secularism also came along technological improvements. In the absence of parental guidance and with a disintegrated village, the youth turned to the uncensored social media for solace and guidance. The result was the increase of social vices like crime, prostitution, drug abuse and radicalisation.

The churches which taught good morals and values and were once vibrant, now seemed backward. People joined groups that promised better things than values. Unknowingly, cultism, materialism and idolatry became a way of life. With the carefree lifestyle, poverty rates rose and jobless youths turned to gambling in the hope of getting rich quickly. Consequently, the dignity of work and productivity was compromised, crime rates increased as people, especially young people, had gambled away all they had. They could do anything to get an extra coin to gamble.

Some community members got concerned and sought to redeem their moral bearing by devising ways of rehabilitating and restoring the village's moral glory. They vowed to work to reclaim and instill good morals, the sacredness of marriage and the role of family in raising disciplined children. Slowly, the community regained its morality and family values. Order was restored and community laws were reinforced and followed. Each person played their role and the village prospered.

## Judge: Situation analysis

The family is the first and basic social unit of society. The family is nature's established association for the supply of mankind's everyday wants. For a civilisation to succeed, the family must succeed, and right now, it is not. The family in today's

society faces many challenges including drug addiction, crimes and militia groups among the youths, same sex attraction, child abuse, negative media influence, lack of discipline, balancing work and family, materialism, poverty and divorce among others. All these are symptoms of the spiritual and moral crisis confronting our society today. The crisis stems from the secularisation assaulting the family and society. Worst is the people's indifference towards the spiritual and moral crisis, which has given rise to cultures that totally disregard values. Family values like prudence, love, caring, modesty, self-discipline, trustworthiness, responsibility, respect, fairness and fidelity are no longer being cultivated.

Some of the social evils we are witnessing today such as corruption, infidelity, indiscipline, unrest in schools and irresponsible parents stem from lack of family values. Parents and those charged with raising children have neglected their responsibility. The **#Ifikie wazazi** on youth immorality in urban areas is just a tip of the iceberg. Many vices can be attributed to lack of moral formation in families; social and economic policies, directly or indirectly, play a role in influencing family values.

The Church, another social institution, is aware of the problems facing the family, which is the principal cell of human society. It calls us to reflect on how the family is related to the plan of God in Salvation. This call is articulated in her Catechism, that calls us to a moral life and uses it as its framework. The teaching of Jesus about the two great commandments of love - to love God above all things, and to love one's neighbour as oneself - sums up the Ten Commandments: the first three concern love of God, and the other seven the love of neighbour.

In the public discourses, the Church further teaches that people have a right and a duty to participate in society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable. But this ought to be done conscious of marriage and the family as the central social institutions that must be supported and strengthened, not undermined.

Therefore, motherhood and fatherhood must be exercised responsibly, with full consideration of a proper hierarchy of values. This means that married couples must be open to life. Granted, motherhood and fatherhood are not exercised in a vacuum. In making their decisions, couples are entitled to consider the "physical, economic, psychological, and social conditions" which they confront. These present the setting in which responsible parenthood is practiced.

In light of this desire, the Holy Father encourages everyone to look with hope to the future and recommend behaviour, which preserves and fosters love within the family, namely, by saying "Can I? May I?", "Thank you" and "I am sorry" and never allowing the sun to set on a quarrel or misunderstanding, without having the humility to ask for forgiveness.

## **Readings**

Genesis 15:5-12.17-18

Philippians 3:17-4:1

Luke 9:28-36

## **Spiritual reflection**

For the family to succeed, it must journey with God. This is what Abraham did. He completely trusted God. With God, things cannot go wrong. We are called to leave the worldly life for a godly one. Families that are faithful to God's word will prosper even if they meet obstacles along the way. Just like in the transfiguration, God shone his light to those who follow him.

## **Reflection questions**

1. What is the role of the Church regarding family values?
2. Name some basic family values you know.
3. How do we as a Small Christian Community help in building family values?
4. How do we as a Small Christian Community emphasise a positive usage of the new Information Communication Technology (ICT), especially within a family set up?

## **Examination of conscience**

1. How am I involved in promoting family values?
2. How am I involved in promoting positive use of technology?
3. Have I protected the rights of the elderly and vulnerable in my community?
4. How can I protect and promote these rights?