

Family Day

by Guardian in Chief Richard A. London

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How humanity is challenging the sacred boundaries of the Orders and Degrees of Life, which have been gifted to us by Mother Nature, would seem to know no bounds. We are living in a time of unique uncertainty, inquisitiveness, and questioning about the evolving utilization of the resources, roles, and responsibilities we identify with during these times of significant change.

Since the early 1900s there have been two days set aside, one in May and the other in June, initially intended to acknowledge gratitude for our Mothers and Fathers. Growing up, I came to know both days as very special days.

In my mind, both days are so very special because our children are so very special. In fact, without children there would be no need to celebrate mothers and fathers. Perhaps the time has come to merge these two days of appreciation into a day of Family appreciation.

As a diehard fan of the musical group, The O'Jays, I'd like to give you a sense of the lyrics from their 1975 song "Family Reunion," written by Kenny Gamble and Leon Huff. Although the family structure celebrated in the song may not be as typical for some today, I believe these lyrics still speak to the underlying principles embodying the Law of Centralization and to the principles guiding the offices of the Temple Outer Guard, Inner Guard, Treasurer, and Scribe.

“Family Reunion”

It's so nice to see
All the folks you love together
Sittin 'and talkin 'bout
All the things that's been goin 'down

It's been a long, long time
Since we had a chance to get together
Nobody knows the next time we see each other
Maybe years and years from now

Family reunion {Got to have}
A family reunion
Family reunion
{It's so nice to come together} To come together
{To get together}

I wish grandma could see
The whole family
I sure miss her face
And her warm and tender embrace

And if grandpa was here
I know he'd be smiling for me a tear
To see what he has done
All the offsprings from his daughters and sons

A family reunion (Gonna have)
A family reunion (Ooh, ooh)
Family reunion
(It's so nice to come together) To come together
(To get together)

Ooh...ooh...ooh...ooh...ooh...

Ooh...ooh...ooh...ooh...

At least once a year we should have

Family reunion

A family reunion (We need to do it for the young)

Family reunion

(It'll be nice, it'll be nice to come together) To come together

To get together

Family reunion (Sister knows, heaven knows)

A family reunion (It's good to see you)

Family reunion (I said we are sinkin 'hands, makin 'plans)

(Maybe next year) To come together (Maybe next year)

A family reunion (Ooh...ooh...ooh...ooh...ooh...)

A family reunion {We gotta have, we gotta have}

Family reunion (It'll be nice, it'll be so nice)

(To come together) To come together

(To get together)

You know the family is the solution to the world's problems today

Now let's take a look at the family

In the family the father is like the head, the leader, the director

Not domineering, but showing love, guidance

For everyone else in the family

Now if we could get all the fathers of the world

To stand up and be fathers

That would be great

Then we have mothers

Who are the right arm of the father

There's supposed to-to-to do the cooking

Raise the children, do the sewing

And help the father to guide and direct

Then there's the son
The son, most sons are like imitators of their father
So we're back again to the father
And he is guiding in the right way
The son is definitely gonna be alright
Then we have the daughter
Watching her mother
Be-because sooner or later she's gonna be a mother
And she'll have her own sons and daughters
It don't, it don't just stop there with the family or
Of-of yours or mine
It's a universal family
Under one divine purpose
And one divine father
That is if we all come together no matter what color, race, creed
Because that's all in the head whether you wanna believe it or not
Cause you'll bleed

Hoo...
Family, family reunion
It'll be nice, so nice, so nice

In the spirit of family and family reunion on this 114th Father's Day, I want to share a meaningful perspective written by Jean Tedford Doty. Jean was a teenager in 1935 when she and her mother, Gertrude "Teddy" Tedford, traveled by Greyhound bus from Boston, Massachusetts, to begin a new life here in Halcyon. Within a few months they started construction of a Cape-Cod-style home at the south end of Helena Street, and were eventually joined by Gertrude's parents and two sisters, who lived in Halcyon for their lifetimes. I hope Jean's thoughts about family and family reunion resonate with you, too.

HALCYON CHILDREN

One of the peculiarities of any rural community is that when their young people reach the end of adolescence, they find themselves faced with the fact that they must move out into other communities or into the cities in order to make a living. The country cannot support all of them, so most of them must leave in order to become self-supporting. The breaking of ties with home and family that the majority of young people must face carries with it certain problems, which it might be profitable to discuss.

Here in Halcyon the same situation obtains; Halcyon children have gone and are going out into new life experiences. I would like to explain what I mean by the term "Halcyon child." I am referring to those people who have spent their childhood and adolescence here in the village, and who have been exposed to the philosophy which is taught in the Temple, regardless of their chronological age. By the same token, members of the Temple are referred to as "children of the Temple" whether they are 18 or 88, and in a larger sense consider themselves "children of God." I have been a Halcyon child for twenty-two years, and have left the village and returned to it several times.

Halcyon children leave the village, usually for one of four reasons: to attend an out-of-commuting-distance college; to enter one of the Armed Services; to marry someone living elsewhere; or to find a job. In each instance the adjustments which must be made are identical to those required of all young people away from home and family for the first time, regardless of the milieu in which they grew up. They must face, first, the confusion of mind that results from a completely new life situation and surroundings. They must face homesickness for a while, and loneliness for the familiar faces of friends and relatives. More important, they must learn to take the responsibility for their own decisions, and to take the consequences when

they make poor decisions. This is one of the most implacable facts of adult living, and it can be either exasperating or challenging, depending upon whether one says "I want to have my cake and eat it too, as well as get someone else to bake it," or whether one says "I am the Master of my fate; I am the Captain of my soul."

The decision to leave Halcyon is only the first of a long series of more and more bewildering decisions that come later, both moral and purely practical ones. The thorough grounding which the Halcyon child gets in ethics is of inestimable help in this regard. There are, however, certain adjustments which most other people are not called upon to make by reason of their more conventional upbringing, and which the Halcyon child should look at before he or she takes the big plunge into adult life outside the village.

For the Halcyon child who enters college, there are many new exciting experiences as well as difficulties in store. The typical college campus is humming with activity from one end to the other; the very air seems electric with the combined energy and ambition of several hundred young men and women, all dashing importantly around to classes, and most of them dedicated to the proposition that they are soon going to set the world on fire. In this close proximity of budding young doctors, businessmen, teachers, and politicians, the excitement and interest they generate is contagious and leads to numerous gatherings in the cafeteria or on the steps of the library. Little knots of students can always be found exchanging ideas, discussing courses, arguing and explaining. Each student is secretly convinced that he or she has the answer to all the problems of the universe, and this leads to discussion of philosophic ideas as inevitably as day leads to night. Looking at life from their own frame of reference, the Political Science major, for instance, sees a solution to most of humanity's problems in more perfect government and a more equitable economic system. The education major believes the solution lies in more and better education; the psychology major

in mental health and perfect adjustment to our environment; and so on.

Now, when the student from Halcyon gets embroiled in these discussions, as must happen sooner or later, they find themselves in the uncomfortable position of having to disagree with just about everybody. While we are taught here in the Temple that such things as good health, an education, better government, and many other things are very important to the evolution and happiness of mankind, they are not the most vital. We believe that before any of these admirable things can be accomplished, people must develop spiritually and morally, and that the only way they can do this is for each individual person to start right at home and work on their own personal shortcomings. We believe that informing ourselves of the spiritual nature of the universe and humanity's place in it, as taught in Temple Teaching and the Bible as well as various other books, is important to real understanding of the world and as a guide to right living.

The average young person brought up in an average community has, of course, been taught very similar things, but sometimes this attitude seems to be, Well, of course it would be nice if people all lived by the Golden Rule and the precepts of Christianity, but it isn't going to happen, human nature being what it is and always has been. The result is that they put their religious and philosophic beliefs in a nice little watertight compartment labeled "for Sunday morning only" and then proceed to study and to work for "better things for better living" without examining their own methods or motives any too closely. This is a very basic difference of opinion, and when the student from Halcyon is called upon to explain their position, they sometimes find themselves looking furtively around for the nearest exit. This is because a person learns that as soon as they have stated their basic premises, they will be subjected to a regular barrage of questions on all sorts of metaphysical subjects, designed to make them look ridiculous. And when they realize that they cannot even begin to explain their beliefs without

reference to the Law of Karma and the doctrine of reincarnation, two concepts almost universally misunderstood, they know that they have a big job on their hands.

There are two things they can do. They can either fold up their tent and silently steal away, or they can stand their ground, take a deep breath, and plunge in. The latter course, it seems to me, is the one of greater intellectual honesty, but as in all things, discrimination must be used. If the questioners are really interested in a new point of view, it becomes an obligation to pass on what we believe to be important spiritual truths, even if they are not immediately accepted; a seed may still be sown in another mind that will make it inquire further among spiritual lines later on. If, on the other hand, the questioners are interested only in propagating their own ideas by holding others up to ridicule, no good purpose will be served by making one's self the victim. There is still another consideration: the Halcyon student must ask themselves if they are really sure they know the answers to the questions put to them, and if they can express them in a way that others can understand. They should ask themselves whether they know just where the Temple stands on various issues that might come up in discussion; and if not, they should take steps to find out, and preferably before they ever leave Halcyon. Here, there are any number of people who would gladly answer any questions put to them, and help the student to organize their thoughts on the subject so that they will not be caught unprepared when the time comes.

The Halcyon child who goes into the Armed Service has both advantages and drawbacks which are peculiarly their own. The Temple teaches to use one's own mind in studying occultism, and encourages a person to figure things out for themselves a good deal, instead of learning by rote and accepting everything one hears without question. This sort of training results in some pretty individualistic young people with real convictions on a wide variety

of subjects, something which in the old days used to be called strength of character. A young person with this sort of character and personality should go far, but during the time they are in the Service, they will have to learn to tone down their individuality a bit. In the Service, the watchword is conformity, and one will eat the same food that everyone else eats, sleep in a bed exactly like the others, tilt their hat at the same angle, and march to the same cadence. Regimentation of this sort is galling to most Americans, but especially to those who have been taught to use their own intelligence and judgment. But the Halcyon child must learn to conform, or they will find themselves cooling their heels in the brig, or doing extra guard duty.

There is one area of Service life, however, where conformity is neither necessary nor desirable, and that is in the social life of a certain segment of people in uniform who indulge in questionable activities and whose use of language is abhorrent to the person of good taste and good morals. It is a fairly common mistake for young people to think that in order to be popular and a “good sport” they must conform in this respect also, but such is far from the case. On the contrary, if they stand firmly by their ideals and their sense of what is fitting and proper conduct *without* assuming a “holier than thou” attitude, they will win more admiration and real respect from all their comrades than if they had conformed. By this I don’t mean that immediately when they take their stand everyone else will suddenly bow to their superior judgment, but that over the long run, and gradually, they will find that instead of being laughed at for being a goody-goody, the other young people around them will be attracted to their company. I think this is because of the latent desire in every human being, no matter how misguided, to reach up toward the best that is within themselves and to the sort of conduct and activity which their Higher Self instinctively recognizes as being right and good.

During the first few weeks, life in the Service will seem to be just a long

series of orders: “Get up. Go to bed. Forward march. Turn around. No talking” — until the rookie will feel something like a robot; but here is where Temple training will stand them in good stead. The rookie has been taught the importance of obedience to the great Laws of Life, and through that, obedience to authority of all kinds. The Templar knows that without organization, great numbers of people cannot hope to accomplish much; and also that organization involves authority. They will remember that authority is one of the aspects of the principle of centralization, a principle which is indispensable to any organized body. That knowledge, plus the habits of obedience which they have incorporated into their habit pattern, will make it easier for them to obey orders in the Service, whether the orders come from the rookie’s sergeant or from the Commandant.

Life in the Service is not without its compensations, as the rookie from Halcyon will discover. After the first few hectic weeks, when the numbness begins to wear off, they will find that there is real joy in working with others toward a common goal, and in being a cog in a large and well-run military organization. And when the flags are flying and the band is playing, they will stand a little straighter in their smart new uniform and will, we hope, feel proud and glad to do their part for this America which has been so good to all of us.

Another, and very serious, decision has to be made by the young adult brought up in Halcyon, when they look toward marriage and a family. Aside from the usual decision of whom they will marry, they must decide whether to marry a person of a different faith, or of no faith; whether they should marry the person of their choice if that person is actively antagonistic to Temple philosophy; and if so, whether in good conscience they allow the children to be brought up in another faith. Indeed, this last seems well-nigh impossible, since our philosophy is not the sort that can be trotted out on order and then put back — it permeates every minute of every hour of one’s

life, and influences every decision even though one may not be conscious of it at the time. If this is true, is it really possible to bring up a child without at least unconsciously passing on to it one's own attitudes and beliefs? There are other things for our Halcyon young adult to consider. Pre-supposing that they have married their love who is of another faith and is living too far from Halcyon to get to the Temple, what are they going to do about attending church? Should they go? And if so, to which one? And if not, are they reading the Temple Teachings and Bible every day, and with enough private prayer to satisfy the need for worship and to fulfill the obligations as a Templar? All these are questions which must be answered by each individual personally, but should be thought over long before the time for decision comes.

For all Halcyon children away from the Center, married or unmarried, in school, in the Service, in a job — there are certain common problems and common advantages. Each Halcyon child carries with them into the world *knowledge*, and knowledge of a very high sort: the occult teachings which they have learned here. Every kind of knowledge carries with it some sort of responsibility, as our atomic scientists found out to their great sorrow; and ethical knowledge is no exception. It carries the responsibility of living up to the highest principles that one knows, and the more one knows of the “why” of these principles, the greater the responsibility to oneself and to all those with whom one comes in contact.

The other side of this coin is that spiritual knowledge and understanding also carry with them the security that comes with finding one's spiritual home. In the case of Halcyon children, their spiritual home is also their physical home: this Temple building, this village, these people who are in a real and very dear way their own family. In no other type of community is there such a sense of family, bound together not only by personal love but by a common purpose, united and uplifted by the ideals to which they are

all dedicated. A feeling of “belonging” is one of the most comforting in the world and the Halcyon child has it here in plenty. No matter how far from the village they go, they can carry with them in their heart and mind not only the love and support of everyone in Halcyon, but the very real protection of the Lodge of Masters. We need only call out in our moments of doubt or loneliness to find that Halcyon and all it stands for is a warm, strong hand on our shoulder, and a firm, straight path for our feet.

— *Jean V. Tedford Doty*

This almost parental, motherly-fatherly advice comes from the perspective of a Halcyon Child who arrived in Halcyon absent a biological father. Similar to a body finding the ways and means to adjust to the loss of a limb or a properly functioning organ, a loving family, be it biological or bonded through the kinship of our “chosen” families, holds the key to how humanity thrives into the future. May we endeavor to celebrate the preciousness of Family.

— *Richard A. London*
6th Guardian in Chief