

Marriage MarkerSM:

FAMILY: YOUR SAFE PLACE

By ROMUALD B. SIMEONE

The “Birdman of Alcatraz”, a convict-for-life who studied birds intensely in solitary and became the world’s expert on the subject, discovered that when a caged bird is threatened, it goes berserk if its cage is round. It goes round and round; it cannot find a corner to cringe in and feel safe. God made family to be our safe place. Check this out. The word “family” includes 3 blending concepts.

1. FAMA: “fame” one’s identity, reputation, acclaimed recognition. A family is where one is accepted without question and has a name, identity and role. With “fama”, one fits in, belongs. Without it, one is a lonely cat in a strange warehouse, depressed, silently seeking survival in a safe place.

2. FAMIS: “hunger”: having a place where basic needs are filled. Where one finds nourishment, training and opportunity to grow and initial fulfillment: food for body, love for soul, acceptance for spirit. These begin with mother’s milk and a warm embrace, a kind voice, ears that listen and responding smiles. Multiple hungers must be replenished daily and securely or body, soul and spirit will starve and atrophy.

3. FAMULUS “servant”...a place where persons of different sexes and ages have each a role to play and whose contribution is valued. To serve and be appreciated for what one does and who one is, is to reign in a “safe-place family mini-kingdom”.

These three elements create an endless friend-relationship that passes understanding. If lacking, heart-gaps, strife and discouragement abound. One safe place lost, another must be found. Until then, the human bird must find its corner or seek solace elsewhere; seek outsiders in lieu of family pattern, “break-out” to find a

“safer place”, or “cut out” with drugs, etc. Jesus teaches and models the “Triple-F Family System” The Bible tells us so.

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