

# A Family Life Poem

Beth Folkerts

'Twas the night before finals,  
And all through the class,  
All the students were working,  
Just hoping they'd pass.

As the students got ready  
With anxiety  
They started to write Families  
In Society.

They reflected and thought hard.  
Each sent up a plea,  
"Dear God, what does Freudenburg  
Consider as key?"

They began to write papers  
With fervor, of course—  
About children and parents,  
Marriage and divorce.

Our text focused on three views:  
Intimacy, strength,  
Diversity, too. Each one  
We addressed at length.

I looked at the semester,  
Asked what I had learned.  
Divorce rate's fifty-fifty  
It's got me concerned.

Communication's crucial  
For marital bliss.  
Between painters and pointers  
It's like an abyss.

Gender roles have been shifting;  
There's been some debate,  
Personally, I would say  
I think it's just great.

Also, sex is an issue  
We just don't discuss.  
Perhaps we don't realize  
What it does to us.

Intimacy's a blessing,  
Of that we are sure.  
But we're iffy, however  
If it will endure.

Cohabitation's gone up  
One thousand percent.  
We advocate marriage to  
Reduce its extent.

Couples move in, then break up.  
It's bad for the child—  
Low achievement, depression  
It's getting quite wild.

Stress is common for parents  
When raising children...  
Satisfaction goes way down,  
Say eight out of ten.

Abuse is on the increase  
Around the U.S.  
But how we can remove it  
Is anyone's guess.

Parents hurt their own children;  
Husbands beat their wives.  
Between drugs and alcohol,  
We're ruining lives.

I thought and I thought, then  
I shook my poor head.  
With all these family problems,  
It must go unsaid:

“The family is in danger;  
We must intervene.”  
As pastor, things’ll be diff’rent  
When I’m on the scene.

I’ll work for the family  
I’ll advocate, teach,  
Support individuals—  
Do more than just preach.

Pre-marital counseling  
Will become a must.  
We’ll work to develop  
Love, respect, and trust.

I’ll teach all my congregants  
“Be wise with money!”  
I’ll show them the model,  
“A to X,Y,Z.”

We’ll give children what they need:  
A two-parent house,  
Comprehensive sex ed., and  
Tools to pick their spouse.

We will start when they are young  
We’ll give them a hand.  
Start relationship training.  
Oh, it will be grand.

We’ll teach the importance of  
Working together.  
With knowledge and attitude,  
It will get better.

Above all, the church will give  
Support to all those  
With any family struggles  
From front to back rows.

We’ll reach out to the lonely  
And befriend the lost  
We will value our neighbor  
No matter the cost.

I learned several theories  
I’ll apply in life.  
The future appears brighter  
For me as a wife.

I’ll process externally;  
He’ll think inside.  
Egalitarians, we’ll  
In power be tied.

Resource management’s tricky,  
But we’ll make it work.  
From the “dance of anger,” we  
Won’t run off or shirk.

I know we’ll push and we’ll pull  
With each step we take.  
Still, we’ll use all that I’ve learned;  
Our marriage won’t break.

This class has taught me a lot;  
Left an impression.  
Impacted my personal life  
And my profession.

I learned lots and I grew, too.  
I increased concern.  
Focusing on our future  
I tried to discern

What can be done for people?  
No panacea...  
Yet, through my reflection I  
Had an idea.

If you want my prescription  
For families in need:  
Certified Family Life  
Educators, indeed.